

# NPL Site Narrative for Martin Aaron, Inc.

## MARTIN AARON, INC. Camden, New Jersey

**Conditions at Proposal (April 23, 1999):** The 2.4-acre Martin Aaron, Inc. site is located at 1542 South Broadway in a mixed industrial and residential section of Camden, New Jersey. Various companies, including Martin Aaron, Inc., used the site for drum recycling for approximately 30 years. Historically, Kifferty Morocco Manufacturing Co. operated a tannery at the site from 1887 until 1908. Castle Kid Company purchased the property at that time and manufactured glazed leathers until the City of Camden seized the property for tax delinquency in 1940. Benjamin Schmerling bought the property in 1940 and leased portions to H. Preston Lowden Co. for wool and hair blending and to American Chain and Cable Company - PA Lawnmower Division for manufacturing. Martin Aaron, Inc. purchased the property in 1969, and operated a drum reconditioning facility until 1985 under the name Drum Service of Camden. At that time, Martin Aaron, Inc. sold the business to a corporation jointly owned by Westfall Ace Drum Company (Wadco) and Rhodes Drum Co. Wadco occupied the majority of the facility and ceased operating in March 1995. Rhodes Drum Co. operated at the building near the southeast corner of the site until they ceased operations around end of 1998. It is reported that a trucking company currently uses the property for the storage and transfer of trailers. Martin Aaron, Inc. still owns the property.

Numerous areas of concern have been identified at the site. The processing rooms, where drums were drained, pressure-washed with caustic solution, and rinsed, are major areas of concern. The residues were collected in four sewer basins. The basins were allegedly designed to discharge wastewater after pH adjustment to the combined sanitary/storm sewage system, however, it is suspected that some of the effluent discharged directly to the subsurface. There was a baghouse for dust collection from drum sandblasting and a paint booth where oil-based paint was applied. Various aboveground and underground storage tanks were associated with the site processes. The outdoor paved and unpaved portions of the property were used for drum storage. Leaking roll-off containers and drums have been observed on site. Reports indicate that holes were dug throughout the property for the disposal of wastes, and that liquid and solid wastes and 200 to 1,000 containers of waste were buried on the property. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has confirmed the reports of disposal, observed buried drums of hazardous waste and found contaminated soils at depths below the water table. NJDEP reports that chemical wastes were illegally deposited on the site in March 1999. Sampling events conducted by the NJDEP between 1986 and 1998 identified volatile organic compounds (VOC) and inorganic constituents in site sewer basins and drums. Inorganic constituents found at high concentrations in the sources included arsenic, cadmium, mercury, selenium, barium, chromium, and lead. The same VOCs and inorganic contaminants have also been detected in soils throughout the property and from depths of 0 to 8 feet. The highest concentrations were detected near the drum processing areas where the sewer basins are located.

The aquifer of concern and the most productive source of groundwater in Camden is the Potomac-Raritan-Magothy (PRM) aquifer system, which consists of three unconsolidated water-bearing units. There is hydraulic interconnection vertically throughout the PRM aquifer system in the Camden area. Analytical data from on-site monitoring wells and direct-push groundwater samples document observed releases of 1,2-dichloroethene to the lower portion of the Magothy Formation, approximately 50 feet below ground surface. Public-supply wells tapping the PRM aquifer system within 4 miles of the site provide water to

approximately 105,000 persons. The nearest of these wells is a Camden City well located approximately 1.75 mile to the east-northeast.

Odors emanating from the site have been noted dating back to April 1980. Solvent-type odors were noted during NJDEP inspections and off-site reconnaissances in 1986 and 1988. The odors have been observed to be strongest in the areas of the sewer basins and are believed to have originated from drum cleaning operations. NJDEP issued a Notice of Violation in August 1983 for a negligent release of hydrogen chloride gas from improperly closed drums. EPA issued a Notice of Violation in October 1987 for excessive volatile organic emissions from painting/coating operations.

The site is currently used by 1 or 2 employees of a trucking company. There are approximately 450,000 residents, 234 acres of wetlands, and three endangered species habitats within 4 miles of the site.

**Status (July 1999):** EPA is considering various alternatives for this site.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.