

EPA encourages public participation. If you have any questions or would like additional information about the Diaz Chemical Corporation Superfund site, please contact:

Michael Basile

Community Involvement Coordinator
186 Exchange Street, Buffalo, NY 14204
(716) 551-4410
basile.michael@epa.gov

John DiMartino

Remedial Project Manager
(212) 637-4270
dimartino.john@epa.gov

General information on the Diaz Chemical Corporation Superfund site may be found at:
Community Free Library
86 Public Square
Holley, New York 14470
(585)-638-6987

SITE UPDATE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will begin the second and final phase of thermal treatment of contaminated soil and groundwater at the Diaz Chemical Corporation Superfund site in March 2020. EPA used information obtained during the first phase of treatment to design the larger scale system needed to treat the remainder of the on-site contaminated soil and groundwater. The second phase, which targets 1.5 acres of the overall site, will be performed in two stages and is projected to take up to five years to complete.

PHASE ONE TREATMENT

The first phase of the thermal treatment was conducted to help design the full-scale treatment. It provided information such as the best treatment temperature, technology, and duration to use for the second phase. Specifically, thermal conductive heating was used to vaporize the contaminants in the soil and groundwater. The vapors were then captured by adjacent extraction wells and treated with granular activated carbon (a common method used in drinking water treatment which uses carbon, or charcoal, to remove organic contaminants, pollutants, as well as taste and odor-related compounds). The thermal treatment technology was effective and will be utilized for the second phase of treatment.

PHASE TWO TREATMENT

The design of the second phase of treatment is complete and a contractor has been selected, with work expected to begin in March 2020. Work will start with site preparation activities, including replacing the site's existing perimeter fence, installing utilities, clearing vegetation, and preparing the site to allow for construction activities. Actual construction of the system is slated to start this summer, and the system should be operational in winter 2021. In addition to the in-situ, or in place, thermal treatment, soil from five areas will be excavated, consolidated, thermally treated, and disposed off-site. The excavated areas will be backfilled with clean soil. In consideration of the local residential community, the project incorporates measures to minimize impacts on quality of life, including site security, perimeter air monitoring, noise monitoring, light reduction, and traffic control plans. After the second phase of operations is complete, the site will undergo restoration activities (currently estimated to take three months), such as grading the soil to ensure proper drainage, and revegetation to prevent erosion.



In May 2017, EPA established a task force to restore the Superfund program to its rightful place at the center of the Agency's core mission to protect health and the environment.

epa.gov/superfund/superfund-task-force

SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

The site is located about 25 miles west of Rochester, New York and includes the five-acre Diaz Chemical Corporation facility, which is located at 40 Jackson Street, Village of Holley, Orleans County, as well as parts of the surrounding residential neighborhood. Diaz Chemical manufactured specialty organic chemicals for the agricultural, pharmaceutical, photographic, color and dye, and personal care products industries. The facility released chemicals into the environment from 1975 to 2002.

In January 2002, a reactor vessel in a process building overheated, causing its safety valve to rupture. Approximately 75 gallons of a chemical mixture was released through a roof stack vent. The release consisted primarily of a mixture of steam, toluene, and 2-chloro-6-fluorophenol, as well as related chemicals. The mixture landed on properties in the residential neighborhood immediately adjacent to the facility and was visible as red-colored droplets. As a result of the release, several residents voluntarily relocated to area hotels with assistance from Diaz Chemical.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and EPA performed sampling of indoor air, soil, interior surfaces, and household items in the affected neighborhood. The data indicated that there were no immediate or short-term threats to people's health. In June 2003, Diaz Chemical filed for bankruptcy and abandoned the Diaz Chemical facility, leaving behind large volumes of chemicals in drums and tanks. From 2003 to 2007, EPA removed these chemicals and dismantled the Diaz Chemical production buildings. On July 22, 2004, the site was placed on EPA's National Priorities List.

Based on the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act, because the residents were outside their houses for more than one year, in March 2005, EPA selected a remedy involving the property acquisition and permanent relocation of eight owner-occupant and two tenant families who had remained in temporary quarters since 2002. Under that remedy, the acquired residences were to be maintained until a final remedy for the site was selected. Subsequently, with the assistance of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, EPA purchased all eight houses and provided the owners with relocation assistance. In addition, the two individual tenants were assisted with relocating into new rental dwellings.

EPA performed a comprehensive study of the site to determine the nature and extent of contamination, assess potential risks to human health and the environment, and develop, screen and evaluate alternative treatment technologies. The study determined that site-related contamination does not exist in the surrounding residential area and, therefore, a neighborhood cleanup was not necessary.

On September 26, 2012, EPA selected a cleanup plan for the site that included thermal treatment of the contaminated soil and groundwater at the Diaz Chemical property, and natural processes to address the groundwater contamination downgradient of the source areas. The cleanup plan also included building demolition to allow access to contaminated soil on site.

EPA determined that the sale or transfer of the eight EPA-owned properties was consistent with the final cleanup and negotiated an agreement with the Village of Holley and the Village of Holley Development Corporation (VHDC). EPA transferred the eight properties to the VHDC in June 2017. Working with a local realtor and law firm, VHDC sold the houses in September 2017. The proceeds were split with EPA.

<http://www.epa.gov/region02/superfund/npl/diazchemical/>



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