

# NPL Site Narrative for Rodale Manufacturing Co., Inc.

## RODALE MANUFACTURING CO., INC. Emmaus Borough, Pennsylvania

**Conditions at Proposal (July 29, 1991):** Rodale Manufacturing Co., Inc., formerly produced electrical wiring devices at a 4,000-square foot, U-shaped building at Sixth and Minor Streets in the Borough of Emmaus, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania. The plant is surrounded by industrial and residential areas. Rodale operated the plant from the 1950s to 1975, when Square D Co. assumed control, manufacturing wiring devices as well as electrical connectors. Operations ceased in February 1986.

According to Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources (PA DER) files, electroplating waste and rinse waters were disposed of from at least 1961 until 1967, in on-site wells, including the following three. Well No. 1 is 452 feet deep and cased to 444 feet. Electroplating wastes and solvents were disposed in the well until approximately 1967, according to a 1988 study by a Square D contractor. A brick cistern measuring 8 by 8 by 12 feet apparently served as a funnel to the well. Well No. 2, 251 feet deep and cased to 50 feet, was used for disposal of trichloroethene (TCE), other wastes, and possibly cyanide wastes. Well No. 3, 426 feet deep and cased to 400 feet, was used for disposal of TCE, oil, possibly cyanide wastes, and sodium phosphate cleaner.

In 1981, a Square D contractor removed wastes from three wells and transported the materials to hazardous waste facilities regulated under Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Copper, zinc, chromium, nickel, lead, and silver, which are typically found in electroplating wastes, and TCE were detected in on-site wells and nearby monitoring wells in 1981 and 1989 by Square D contractors and in 1989 by EPA. There is a general TCE problem in Emmaus Borough. Since 1981, seven wells of the Emmaus Municipal Water Works have shown varying levels of TCE. Borough Well No. 5 was taken out of service in 1981 and was abandoned in December 1988 because of TCE contamination. In October 1990, the Borough of Emmaus installed air strippers on three wells. The borough continues to monitor its wells for TCE. An estimated 21,000 people obtain drinking water from public and private wells and springs within 4 miles of the site; a borough well is within 0.5 mile of the site. Evidence suggests that Rodale is contributing to TCE contamination in both public and private wells.

**Status (October 1992):** EPA is investigating the possibility that Square D will conduct a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study to determine the type and extent of contamination at the site and identify alternatives for remedial action.

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.