

NPL Site Narrative for Foote Mineral Co.

FOOTE MINERAL CO.

East Whiteland Township, Pennsylvania

Conditions at Proposal (February 7, 1992): The Foote Mineral Co. site covers 79 acres on Bacton Hill Road in East Whiteland Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania. The site is bordered on the northwest by Conrail tracks and on the west by Church Farm School property. Since 1988, the company has been a part of Cyprus Specialty Metals Co. Foote has manufactured lithium halides and lithium metal products in both liquid and solid form since 1942. In addition, Foote custom-grinds a variety of minerals and alloys. In the past, the company produced inorganic fluxes for the steel industry and other metal products.

Various disposal practices have been used over the years. Large amounts of lithium waste waters were disposed of into a former limestone quarry known as the "wet quarry" until 1975, when Foote stopped the disposal under orders from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources. Until 1966, municipal wastes, demolition debris, and waste water from cleaning drums contaminated with lithium were disposed of in a nearby "dry quarry." The wet quarry contains approximately 50 feet of waste material; the dry quarry, 15 feet.

Until 1975, three unlined settling ponds were used to collect impurities associated with crushing and grinding of lepidolite ore. In addition, waste organic solvents and soluble lithium wastes were burned in a pit intermittently during 1960-79. Also, drums containing waste lithium arsenite were buried on-site.

Lithium, chromium, arsenic, antimony, tetrachloroethene, trichloroethene, 1,2-dichloroethane, and benzene are present in on-site monitoring wells. Lithium, chromium, and boron are present in off-site private wells, according to tests conducted since 1988 by EPA. Lithium is also present in an off-site public well. An estimated 42,300 people obtain drinking water from public and private wells within 4 miles of the site, the nearest a private contaminated well 800 feet downgradient of the site. Four public water systems are involved: Philadelphia Suburban Water Co., Uwchlan Township Municipal Authority, and two smaller systems.

On June 29, 1990, Cyprus Foote Mineral Co. and EPA signed an Administrative Consent Order under Section 1431(a) of the Safe Drinking Water Act. Under the order, Cyprus Foote was to (1) conduct a survey of all drinking water wells in the area potentially impacted by lithium, boron, and chromium contamination, (2) provide alternative water supplies to any home with unacceptable levels of contamination from those three elements, and (3) establish a long-term monitoring program to ensure a level of future protection. Cyprus Foote has fully complied with the requirements of the order.

Status (October 1992): Cyprus Foote Mineral Co. has excavated approximately 15,000 square yards of soil potentially contaminated by leakage from an underground petroleum storage tank and is treating the soil using a bioremediation technique. According to the company, the buried drums of waste lithium arsenic have been removed from the 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.