

NPL Site Narrative for Spectron, Inc.

SPECTRON, INC. Elkton, Maryland

Spectron, Inc., covers approximately 8 acres at 111 Providence Road in Elkton, Cecil County, Maryland. The area is primarily rural. From the 1800s until 1946, the site was occupied by several paper manufacturers. In 1961, Galaxy Chemicals, Inc., began recovering organic solvents from wastes generated by the electronics, pharmaceutical, paint, lacquer, coatings and chemical process industries. In 1975, the company went bankrupt. In 1976, Solvent Distillers, Inc., began operations at the property. In 1978, the company changed its name to Spectron, Inc. The facility closed in August 1988, and Spectron is currently in bankruptcy proceedings.

Throughout the years, several lagoons reportedly were in use. The location of one evaporation lagoon can be documented. During a joint EPA/Maryland Water Resources Administration inspection at the site in 1979, approximately 1,500 drums were found in the area of the former evaporation lagoon. Approximately 500 of these drums were damaged, rusting, open, and leaking. Adjacent to this lagoon was a sludge pit that received solid residues. It had been filled in June 1969. Also located on the site were between 50 and 73 tanks holding 582,000 gallons of hazardous substances, including chlorinated solvents, other organic compounds, and heavy metals.

Spectron has been inspected many times by both EPA and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). In 1979, MDE sampled cooling water discharges into Little Elk Creek. Results indicated elevated levels of chlorinated solvents, benzene, ethylbenzene, toluene, and xylenes. In 1989, EPA detected similar contaminants in leachate seeps entering Little Elk Creek and also in water samples of the creek downstream of the facility.

Little Elk Creek and Elk River are used for recreational fishing and are designated by the State for protection or maintenance of aquatic life. Little Elk Creek wetlands within 15 miles are also potentially threatened by air pollution. The site has a long history of complaints from nearby residents of odors apparently emanating from the lagoon and sludge pit. Various county, State, and Federal actions were taken against the facility, one leading to its closure in August 1988.

In 1980, MDE installed seven monitoring wells on-site. EPA sampling in March 1981 detected high levels of organic contaminants in several of the wells. EPA sampling in November 1987 confirmed the earlier results. The nearest private wells are within several hundred feet of the site. Approximately 5,200 people obtain drinking water from private wells within 4 miles of the site. Wells are also used for watering livestock.

In May 1989, EPA used CERCLA emergency funds to stabilize the site, preventing the release of contaminants that would be an imminent threat to human health or the environment.

In August 1989, under an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) with the potentially responsible parties (PRPs) issued under CERCLA Sections 106(a) and 122, EPA removed and disposed of wastes and cleaned the tanks, berms, and dikes. In April 1990, EPA negotiated a second AOC to ensure that the PRPs had the opportunity to remove certain materials from the site, and in September 1991, EPA negotiated a

third AOC calling for the PRPs to control releases from seeps or ground water at the site that are entering Little Elk Creek.

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.