

NPL Site Narrative for Paoli Rail Yard

PAOLI RAIL YARD Paoli, Pennsylvania

Conditions at proposal (January 22, 1987): The Paoli Rail Yard covers about 30 acres in Paoli, Chester County, Pennsylvania. The yard consists of an electric train repair facility owned by Amtrak and operated by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA). Routine maintenance and repair of railroad cars involve PCB-containing electrical equipment. The yard is surrounded on three sides by residential communities and on the fourth by commercial facilities. Until February 1986, people used the yard as a shortcut to the station and commercial properties.

In the late 1970s, both EPA and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources (PA DER) inspected the Paoli Rail Yard. This inspection, coupled with subsequent State investigations, led PA DER to issue an order in 1979 requiring Amtrak, SEPTA, and Conrail to determine the extent of contamination and correct any problem areas. The companies took actions primarily involving collection of samples, some cleanup, and further study.

In November 1985, analyses of samples taken in July 1984 by a consultant to the companies were provided to EPA. They indicated a severe PCB problem, with soil contamination as high as 3 percent and to depths of up to 3 feet.

In December 1985, a team consisting of staff from EPA, the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the State Health Department made a preliminary assessment to verify the existing sample results and identify areas of most concern.

On February 25, 1986, EPA filed a complaint under the Toxic Substances Control Act, CERCLA, and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. The complaint sought an order requiring the three companies to limit access to the yard, control migration of PCBs, conduct sampling and analysis, and take measures to clean up the yard and protect worker safety. A security fence was installed as a preliminary measure.

In June 1986, a second agreement was reached requiring the companies to develop a plan to control erosion, sedimentation, and contaminated ground water. In the fall of 1986, EPA used \$600,000 in CERCLA emergency funds to remove contaminated soil in nearby areas and control erosion on the yard.

Status (June 24, 1988): Under a May 1987 agreement with EPA, the three companies are conducting a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) to determine the extent of contamination. Under a separate agreement, SEPTA has taken measures to protect workers in the repair shop at a cost of \$2 million. In October 1987, the three companies agreed to conduct extensive soil sampling in the surrounding neighborhoods, and in January 1988, EPA's emergency program began additional measures to stabilize the yard and nearby Central Avenue.

After this site was proposed, additional technical information became available. Hence, EPA is repropoing the site to allow an additional 60-day comment period.

Status (August 30, 1990): The three companies have completed most of the field work for the RI. RI sampling was extended to investigate oil contamination of ground water discovered in 1989. The RI report is expected shortly.

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.