

SAFETY LIGHT CORPORATION

Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania

Columbia County

11th Congressional District

Site Location/Size:

Safety Light Corporation (SLC) is located in South Centre Township near Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, in Columbia County. The 1.5 acre SLC property is bounded on the north by Old Berwick Road, on the east and west by residential areas, and on the south by the North Branch of the Susquehanna River.

Site History:

Past and present activities at SLC include the manufacturing of self-illuminated watches and instrument dials, smoke detectors, neutron sources, exit signs, and other merchandise containing radioactive materials, as well as activities regulated under the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). SLC activities have resulted in contamination of surface and subsurface soil, surface water (lagoons and the Susquehanna River), sediment, and ground water. Analyses of ground water collected from nearby private wells indicate the presence of radionuclides at concentrations elevated one or two standard deviations above background conditions and threaten the area's drinking water.

Site Contamination/Contaminants:

From the 1940s to the 1960s, manufacturing at the property used several radionuclides; radium was the most widely used radionuclide at SLC. Prior to 1980, activities involving radium-226 and most other radionuclides ceased, and tritium remained as the only radionuclide used in the manufacturing of self-illuminating watch dials, instruments, and other products. Waste generated at SLC includes solid and liquid wastestreams contaminated with radioactive materials, including radium, strontium, cesium, and tritium.

Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:

Ground water contamination as a result of activities at SLC have impacted drinking water wells located within 4 miles of the facility, including four private drinking water wells and potentially 15 community and nine nontransient noncommunity wells. These twenty-eight drinking water wells serve about 3,287 people. Contaminant concentrations exceeding health-based benchmarks were found in four residential wells.

Response Activities (to date):

The SLC property currently is undergoing decommissioning. Decommissioning plans, cost estimates, and characterization reports have been prepared to determine the remedial measures required to return the property to unrestricted use. Based on the decommissioning cost estimates prepared, SLC is unable to finance the decommissioning. NRC, the lead regulatory agency, is unable to conduct the decommissioning necessary to return SLC to unrestricted use. Therefore, the NRC requested assistance from EPA Region 3 with cleanup of SLC through NPL listing.

[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination. See 56 FR 5600, February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]

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.