Introduction

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) invites the public to comment on a Proposed Plan to clean up the Chemtronics Superfund Site, located in Swannanoa, NC. This fact sheet discusses EPA’s Proposed Plan to address the adverse environmental impacts resulting from Site-related contamination not addressed in the 1988 Record of Decision (ROD) and the 1989 ROD Amendment. The public is encouraged to comment on the Cleanup Plan during the comment period. The Cleanup Plan and associated documents related to the Chemtronics Site activities are available in the Administrative Record of the Information Repository housed at the Ellison Library on the campus of Warren Wilson College.

Background

The Chemtronics property is 1,065 acres and is located at 180 Old Bee Tree Road, approximately 8 miles east of Asheville, in the community of Swannanoa, NC. The property is divided into two separate areas commonly referred to as the Front Valley (FV) and the Back Valley (BV).

The property was first developed and operated as an industrial facility in 1952. The primary products manufactured on site were explosives, flares, propellants, military incapacitating agents, and a variety of specialty chemicals. Various waste products and byproducts associated with the manufacturing were disposed of on site. The primary waste products included chlorinated and non-chlorinated solvents, acidic solutions, byproducts of the manufacturing processes, and solid waste such as gloves and coveralls (protective clothing). Commercial operations at Chemtronics ceased in 1994.

NPL and Remedial Investigation

The Site was placed on the National Priorities List (NPL) in 1982. A Remedial Investigation was conducted from 1984 to 1988 which primarily focused on the waste disposal areas associated with former Site operations. EPA issued a ROD in 1988 and a ROD Amendment in 1989. A second Remedial Investigation (RI) took place in 2015. Soil, groundwater, surface water and sediment samples were collected as part of the Remedial Investigation. In addition, the potential drinking water survey was updated and sampling was performed at eight off-site drinking water wells that were analyzed for Site-related contaminants and found none attributable to the Site.

We want your comments!

The EPA relies on public input to ensure the concerns of the community are considered in selecting an effective remedy for each Superfund Site. The public is encouraged to comment on the documents from:

July 14, 2016, to September 12, 2016
EPA’S Preferred Cleanup Remedy

Based on results from the 2015 Remedial Investigation, baseline human health risk assessment and ecological risk assessment, the EPA determined that remedial actions were required in the FV and BV. EPA’s preferred cleanup plan is based on the Feasibility Study and results from a number of pilot tests conducted in the FV and BV. The preferred cleanup plan consists of excavating contaminated soils in select areas of the FV and disposing them off-site, and to address contaminated groundwater in the FV and the BV. EPA prefers the groundwater remedy to include active bioremediation within the groundwater aquifer in select areas of the site with long-term groundwater monitoring and monitored natural attenuation for the groundwater plumes. Institutional controls (i.e. limits to land and groundwater use) will be placed on the approximately 535-acre Superfund Site portion of the property.

Public Comment

EPA relies on public input to ensure the concerns of the community are considered in selecting an effective remedy for each Superfund Site. The public comment period runs from July 14, 2016, through September 12, 2016. The Administrative Record and Information Repository for the Chemtronics Superfund Site is located at the Ellison Library on the campus of Warren Wilson College, 701 Warren Wilson Road in Swannanoa, NC.

EPA will host a public meeting on Thursday, July 14, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. at the Swannanoa Fire Station, 510 Bee Tree Road in Swannanoa, NC. Representatives from EPA will present the details of the Proposed Plan to address the environmental impacts at the Chemtronics Superfund Site, and answer any questions the public may have regarding the preferred cleanup remedy. You may email your comments to bornholm.jon@epa.gov or, if you prefer to submit written comments, please mail them, postmarked no later than September 12, 2016, to Jon Bornholm at US EPA, 61 Forsyth Street, SW, 11th Floor, Atlanta, GA 30303.

After EPA has received comments and questions during the public comment period, EPA will summarize the comments and provide responses in the Responsiveness Summary which will be part of the Amended Record of Decision (AROD). The AROD will select the final remedial action and will provide the rationale of EPA’s selection.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Information Repositories
Ellison Library on the campus of Warren Wilson College
701 Warren Wilson Road
Swannanoa, NC

U.S. EPA Region 4 Office
Records Center
61 Forsyth St, SW
Atlanta, GA 30303