

NPL Site Narrative for United Metals, Inc.

UNITED METALS, INC. Marianna, Florida

Conditions at Proposal (September 5, 2002): The United Metals, Inc., site is located in Marianna, Jackson County, Florida, approximately 2.5 miles south of Interstate 10 and approximately 1,000 feet east of State Road 71. The site, which is now abandoned, was used primarily as a lead-acid and nickel-cadmium battery reclamation facility. The site is being proposed to the NPL because a release of lead, chromium, and other metals has been documented in facility soils, in a nearby wetland, and in a habitat used by a Federally threatened species. The release also poses a threat to a downstream recreational fishery and additional wetland areas.

From 1979 until 1991, United Metals, Inc., processed and recycled used batteries within a 24-acre fenced area at its Marianna facility. In 1981, the facility processed as many as 10,000 to 12,000 batteries per week, resulting in 2,500 gallons of acidic wastes per day. Until sometime in the early 1980s, treated and possibly untreated wastewater from the recycling process flowed into a settling basin, then into concrete basins, and finally through a ditch to an unlined holding pond. A second holding pond was constructed to provide additional capacity, but allegedly was never used. The wastewater system eventually was modified so that the wastewater was stored in tanks, eliminating the discharge to the holding pond. The holding ponds subsequently were abandoned, dredged, and backfilled. Dredged sediments from the holding ponds and from contaminated drainage ditches currently are stockpiled in the recycling building on site.

During the 1980s, the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation (FDER) conducted several inspections at the facility. In August 1981, FDER and United Metals, Inc., entered into a Consent Order that required numerous actions to be undertaken by United Metals, including payment of a fine, submittal of a detailed plan evaluating the wastewater system, identification of environmental problems, completion of a limited ground water assessment, and proposal of corrective actions. In July 1986, EPA conducted a RCRA program inspection. EPA noted that RCRA violations persisted, including improper closure of the holding ponds following sediment removal, improper storage of hazardous wastes, inadequate ground water monitoring, and operating without appropriate permits for hazardous waste storage and treatment. As a result of these violations, EPA issued an Amended Complaint and Compliance Order.

United Metals, Inc., discontinued recycling operations and sold the facility to Anrich Industries, Inc. Anrich subsequently renovated the facility and began battery cracking operations in May 1991. On May 22, 1991, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) conducted a Hazardous Waste Inspection of the facility. FDEP noted several RCRA violations and, in July 1991, ordered that all operations cease. In June 1993, a Site Inspection was conducted that included the collection of 15 soil samples and the installation of five monitoring wells. Soil samples collected from the facility production area and drainage ditches were found to be contaminated with lead. In 1994, an Expanded Site Investigation confirmed the presence of lead at significant levels in facility soils and in the drainage ditch that flows into the wetland area.

In March 1995, the EPA Removal Assessment Team conducted a site visit to determine the site's eligibility for a removal action. EPA collected six surface soils samples, four waste samples from 55-gallon drums and three storage tanks, and two water samples to identify the nature and extent of contamination and to

identify the immediate threat to the public and environment. Lead was detected in soils, a flammable liquid was discovered in drums, and 800 gallons of sulfuric acid was found in an on-site storage tank. As a result of these findings, EPA initiated limited removal activities in January 1996, and returned in March 1996 to complete the removal.

The main area of concern at the United Metals, Inc., facility is contaminated soil where the battery recycling activities were performed, as well as contaminated soil along the drainage route to the wetland area located west of the facility. Metals contamination has been documented in the wetland, which also serves as a habitat for the Flatwoods Salamander, a Federally threatened species.

Status (April 2003): EPA is considering various alternatives for this 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.