



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Office of Public Affairs
Region 5
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Illinois, Indiana
Michigan, Minnesota
Ohio, Wisconsin

This Fact Sheet Will Tell You About:

- Building demolition activities
- UST removal activities
- A history of the site
- An update of the PRP proposal
- Ground-water sampling results
- The status of the National Ombudsman review
- A summary of the Community Involvement Plan
- How to get more information

Industrial Excess Landfill Site Update

Uniontown, Ohio

June 2001



Workers remove an underground storage tank (UST) in front of the former Uniontown Tire Company.

This fact sheet provides an update on the on-going activities at the Industrial Excess Landfill (IEL) site. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) is overseeing cleanup work at the site. The work is being conducted by the parties considered potentially responsible for the contamination at the site (referred to as PRPs).

Building Demolition/Tank Removal Begins

This month, the PRPs began demolishing the remaining buildings, removing underground storage tanks (USTs), properly closing water-supply wells, and disposing of remaining waste and debris located at the site.

In preparation for the demolition, the PRPs completed the following pre-demolition activities last fall:

- Conducted an asbestos survey of the antique store and tire shop;
- Consolidated above-ground solids and liquids from the drums on site and collected samples to determine if the contents were hazardous;
- Used ground-penetrating radar around the buildings to locate buried metallic objects such as USTs;
- Consolidated and disposed of debris, garbage, and other solid wastes found inside the abandoned buildings;
- Performed on-site radiation screening on the outside of consolidated drums and near the surface of solids and water waste; and
- Disposed of consolidated drummed wastes and water (temporarily stored in rolloff boxes) at an approved off-site solid waste landfill.

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Site History

The IEL site is a closed landfill located on Cleveland Avenue in Uniontown, Ohio, about 10 miles southeast of Akron. From 1966 to 1980, the landfill accepted wastes of largely undetermined and unknown composition. The site was placed on the U.S. EPA's National Priorities List (NPL) in October 1984. The NPL is a list of the nation's top priority hazardous waste sites eligible for investigation and cleanup under the Superfund program.

An investigation conducted by the U.S. EPA determined that hazardous materials had been landfilled at the site—resulting in the release of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and metals into ground water, and the release of methane gas into the air.

In July 1989, the U.S. EPA issued a record of decision (ROD), which documented the site cleanup plan. The plan included: 1) installation of a multi-layer surface cap, 2) expansion of the existing methane gas venting system, and 3) extraction and treatment of contaminated ground water beneath and near the landfill.

Design of the cleanup plan began in 1990, but was slowed by public concern about the possibility of radioactive waste being buried in the landfill. The U.S. EPA tested ground water for radiation quarterly from May 1992 to March 1993. In September 1994, the U.S. EPA concluded that no significant evidence of radioactive contamination existed at the site and resumed work on designing the cleanup.

Site History Post-1989 ROD

Pattern of Contamination

When the 1989 ROD was signed, a plume of ground-water contamination, including VOCs and metals, had moved outward from the landfill, contaminating nearby residential wells. The U.S. EPA approved a pump-and-treat system to keep the contaminant plume from spreading and to clean the contaminated ground water.

Comparisons of ground-water sampling information collected in 1998

with information collected from 1990 through 1993 showed that VOCs were no longer present at harmful levels in drinking water outside the landfill boundaries. Although elevated levels of metals were found sporadically in off-site monitoring wells, elevated levels of metals were not found in any residential wells off site. The results of ground-water sampling analysis suggested that natural biological and chemical factors had improved ground-water quality at the IEL site. This process is called natural attenuation. In January 1999, the U.S. EPA proposed that the pump-and-treat component of the cleanup plan be eliminated.

Landfill Cap

The 1989 ROD also called for the construction of a landfill cap comprised of both clay and synthetic liners. In January 1999, U.S. EPA proposed modifying the cap design by eliminating the clay liner. The U.S. EPA estimated that the modified cap design would meet performance requirements described in the 1989 cleanup plan. In March 2000, the U.S. EPA signed the ROD amendment, which approved the modification of the cap design and the elimination of the pump and treat system.

In July 2000, the U.S. EPA announced that it was willing to consider a new proposal from the PRPs to change the design of the landfill cap. The new proposal calls for a biodiverse phyto-cap/enhanced natural attenuation remedy (see box below). The PRPs submitted a detailed proposal to the U.S. EPA in November 2000.

U.S. EPA Reviewing PRP Proposal

The U.S. EPA is currently reviewing the detailed biodiverse phyto-cap/enhanced natural attenuation remedy proposal submitted by the PRPs in November 2000, which differs from the original cap specified in the U.S. EPA's record of decision issued in March 2000.

This approach calls for selectively planting trees and other vegetation at certain areas in the landfill to promote natural attenuation and, to a lesser degree, enhance the effectiveness of the existing soil cover. Instead of preventing water from infiltrating the landfill, this remedy assumes that infiltration is desirable because it promotes natural attenuation. The trees provide varied habitat for wildlife, and prevent direct contact with soil. While this is a relatively new approach, both the U.S. EPA and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) have gained experience with it at other sites over the past few years and believe it may be a viable option for the IEL site.

The U.S. EPA expects to make a decision soon about whether to propose amending the record of decision to change the design of the cap. If the U.S. EPA chooses to amend the record of decision, the public will be given opportunities to provide input into the decision-making process.

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In May 2001, the U.S. EPA approved a work plan submitted by the PRPs describing asbestos removal from the buildings, demolition of the buildings, and UST removal. The work plan includes the following activities:

- Seven USTs were removed. This involved pumping and disposing the liquids in the tanks, cleaning the tanks, removing the tanks and any contaminated soil around them, hauling the tanks and contaminated soil to an approved disposal facility, and filling the excavated area with clean soil.
- Asbestos from one of the buildings was removed and transported to an approved disposal facility.
- Two septic tanks were disconnected and filled.
- Two residential wells on the site were properly closed. This involved cutting the well fixtures to ground level and filling in the wells with a cement/bentonite grout. The wells were sampled prior to being closed.

- A storage shed was dismantled by a local resident and transported to his property for his use at his own expense.
- The two remaining buildings will be demolished, and the debris will be disposed of at an approved off-site facility. (A suspected eighth UST will be removed if located during demolition.)

The work is being supervised by the U.S. EPA, the Ohio EPA, and a consultant hired by Lake Township. All appropriate regulations are being followed and the appropriate permits have been obtained. The PRPs developed a health and safety plan to ensure the safety of workers and area residents. This plan was reviewed by the U.S. EPA prior to work beginning at the site.

The work plans describing asbestos removal from the buildings, demolition of the buildings, and UST removal, as well as the health and safety plan for the ground-water sampling and demolition activities, have been placed in the information repositories for the site. The locations of the information repositories are listed on the back page.

Ground-Water Sampling

Another round of ground-water sampling was completed by the PRPs in early June. As in the past, the U.S. EPA, the Ohio EPA, and a consultant from Lake Township provided oversight of the sampling. The results of this most recent round of sampling will be made available to the public after they have been reviewed and validated by the U.S. EPA.

The U.S. EPA has completed its review and validation of the rounds of sampling conducted in August and November 2000. In general, these ground-water sampling results are consistent with previous surveys conducted by the PRPs between 1997 and 1998 and by the U.S. EPA between 1990 and 1993. Radiation testing was also conducted during these sampling rounds. The results of the



A worker samples a well at the IEL site.

August and November 2000 sampling have been reviewed and validated by the U.S. EPA and were found to be usable.

*See **ground-water sampling**, page 5*

National Ombudsman Update

The Office of Ombudsman was established by the Congress as a part of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. The law authorized a National Ombudsman to independently receive, review, and investigate complaints and requests for information by individuals regarding the hazardous waste programs administered by the U.S. EPA. The Ombudsman may then make appropriate recommendations to the U.S. EPA based on such investigations.

In 1998, several citizens, represented by two environmental groups, petitioned the National Ombudsman's office to conduct an independent investigation of the U.S. EPA Region 5's handling of the IEL site. In January 1999, the National Ombudsman's office held a public meeting to listen to community concerns. After two years of reviewing documents and

meeting with the U.S. EPA Region 5 staff, representatives from Congress, state and local governments, citizens, and responsible parties, the National Ombudsman's office issued its report with preliminary recommendations for the IEL site on October 20, 2000. The U.S. EPA Region 5 has provided two sets of comments on the Ombudsman's report, dated October 20, 2000, and December 21, 2000. Copies of the Ombudsman's report and the U.S. EPA's December 21 comments are available for review on U.S. EPA Region 5's web site at www.epa.gov/region5/sites and in the information repositories.

The U.S. EPA is awaiting the final report from the National Ombudsman. Upon its submission to the U.S. EPA, this report will also be placed in the information repositories and on the U.S. EPA web site.

Community Involvement Plan

In October 2000, U.S. EPA representatives met one-on-one with Lake Township residents and officials regarding the on-going investigation and cleanup of the Industrial Excess Landfill. The U.S. EPA interviewed approximately 15 people including residents, business owners, township officials, and members of the media. The purpose of the interviews was to gather information about community concerns regarding the cleanup and enhance communication between community members and the U.S. EPA. Community members provide valuable information on local history, citizen involvement, and site conditions. By identifying the public's concerns, the U.S. EPA is able to more effectively address the community's needs. The following are the main concerns that were raised during the interviews:

End to the Controversy – Most of the people interviewed said that they would like to see an end to the controversy surrounding the investigation and cleanup of the landfill, and would like to see the cleanup move forward.

Landfill Reuse – Some people interviewed questioned what would become of the IEL property after the landfill is capped. Many were interested in seeing the property redeveloped for recreational purposes.

Timeframe for Cleanup – Many people interviewed were concerned about the length of time that the investigation and cleanup are taking. They stated that the cleanup plan should be implemented immediately.

Clay Cap and Phyto-Cap Technologies – People interviewed were divided over the type of cap they thought should be used at the site. Several stated that the clay cap was safer because it would keep rain from

seeping into the landfill and carrying contaminants into the ground water. Other residents stated that, with contamination levels decreasing at the site, the phyto-cap would naturally promote cleanup through the trees' root systems. Still others said that they believed that barrels containing hazardous substances may still be buried at the site and that neither cap would be effective.

Communication Efforts – Most people interviewed said that they would like to see a more organized effort by the U.S. EPA to distribute fact sheets and site updates to the community on a regular basis. A large number of residents stated that they would like to see the U.S. EPA communicate more often in person with local residents and community groups.

These interviews were used to revise the IEL Community Involvement Plan, which was completed in January 2001. A copy of the plan is available for review in the information repositories. As always, the U.S. EPA is available to speak with anyone in the community who is interested in the IEL site.

Redevelopment Initiative

In July 2000, the U.S. EPA awarded Lake Township a Superfund Redevelopment Initiative grant in the amount of \$100,000. The township can use this money to hire technical and legal experts to advise them on redevelopment issues at the site. The township also formed a Community Advisory Group (CAG) to ensure that residents' input would be considered regarding redevelopment. U.S. EPA and Ohio EPA representatives have attended several CAG meetings.

The results of the August and November 2000 ground-water sampling showed the following:

- The concentration of contaminants of concern in the ground water were generally below federal drinking water standards and/or detection limits.
- VOCs detected on site include benzene, vinyl chloride, and 1,2 dichloroethane.
- In both the August and November 2000 sampling rounds, benzene was detected in one on-site well at a level higher than the 1997 or 1998 levels for that well.
- No VOCs were found exceeding drinking water standards off site.
- Similar to previous sampling results, elevated levels of metals were found sporadically on site

Conference Announcement

The U.S. EPA is providing information on the following conference as a courtesy to those who may be interested in the redevelopment of idled, abandoned, or underutilized commercial or industrial properties. This conference is not related to the IEL site.

Brownfields 2001

September 24-26, 2001

McCormick Place Convention Center
Chicago, Illinois

The U.S. EPA, the Illinois EPA, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), and the Engineer's Society of Western Pennsylvania are co-sponsoring a forum on brownfields. The forum will include presentations by experts in the field of brownfields cleanup and development as well as round table discussions on new and innovative techniques.

For more information on the conference, visit the web site at www.brownfields2001.org, or contact Ginny Narsete, the U.S. EPA Region 5 Brownfields Conference Coordinator at (312) 886-4359, or narsete.virginia@epa.gov.

and in off-site monitoring wells. Specifically, arsenic, chromium, and thallium were above drinking water standards at certain wells.

- Sampling results for radiation showed, as in the past, that the levels are similar to background levels. One sample collected from an on-site monitoring well slightly exceeded the drinking water standard for radium. However, it is worth noting that the background well had a radium reading just slightly less than the drinking water standard.

The PRPs have now completed four rounds of ground-water sampling at the site. The PRPs will continue to sample ground water at the site on a quarterly basis for the next three years.

The summary reports for the August and November sampling events, as well as the health and safety plan for ground-water monitoring activities, are available for review in the site information repositories.

Public Involvement in EPA Decisions A National Dialogue Via the Internet

From July 10 - July 20, 2001 the U.S. EPA is convening an online public discussion on improving public involvement in U.S. EPA decision-making. The Dialogue will be based on the U.S. EPA's newly drafted Public Involvement Policy. Join interested citizens, representatives of industry, environmental groups, small businesses, states, local governments, tribes, and other groups to learn more about the draft policy and to share your thoughts and concerns regarding how the U.S. EPA should implement this policy.

To learn more about the Dialogue and to register to participate, visit the Dialogue Web site at:
<http://www.network-democracy.org/epa-pip>.

For more information: Send e-mail to Patricia Bonner at the U.S. EPA: bonner.patricia@epa.gov, or Information Renaissance:
epa@network-democracy.org or call (888) 638-5323.

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Information Repositories

You may review detailed information about the Industrial Excess Landfill site at the information repositories. The repositories are located at:

Hartville Branch Library
411 East Maple Street
Hartville, Ohio

Lake Township Clerk's Office
12360 Market North
Hartville, Ohio

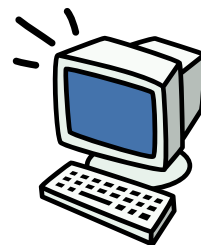


Web Site

This and additional updates can be found on the following web site:

www.epa.gov/region5/sites

Scroll through the list to find
Industrial Excess Landfill site.



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