

NPL Site Narrative for Better Brite Plating Co. Chrome and Zinc Shops

BETTER BRITE PLATING CO. CHROME AND ZINC SHOPS DePere, Wisconsin

Conditions at proposal (October 26, 1989): The Better Brite Plating Co. Chrome and Zinc Shops occupy 2 acres and are approximately 2,000 feet from each other in a primarily residential area of DePere, Brown County, Wisconsin. Metal plating operations conducted at the shops since the early 1960s have contaminated soil and ground water as a result of spills and leaking storage facilities. After the company filed for bankruptcy in October 1985, operations ceased at the chrome shop.

In April 1986, EPA used CERCLA emergency funds to remove contaminated soil, chromic acid, cyanide sludge, and flammable liquids from the chrome shop. All materials were transported to a hazardous waste facility regulated under Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. In May-June 1987, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) used the Wisconsin Environmental Repair Fund to install seven monitoring wells, three of them extending 20 feet into bedrock. Soil and ground water were analyzed. The results indicated chromium contamination into both the shallow aquifer and the upper bedrock aquifer. An estimated 46,000 people obtain drinking water from municipal wells within 3 miles of the site. DePere Municipal Well #2 is about 500 feet downgradient of the zinc shop.

During 1986-88, the State issued orders to stop operations at the zinc shop. The site was abandoned in July 1989.

In March 1988, WDNR received a complaint that yellow water was running from the chrome shop into the city storm sewer. WDNR found chromium in the run-off and in soil at a neighboring residence. The City of DePere is periodically pumping a trench on the chrome shop property and discharging the waters to the DePere Wastewater Treatment Plant. In October 1988, WDNR was notified that the plating building at the shop had been sold and was to be removed. To prevent exposure of grossly contaminated soil under the building, WDNR razed the building, partially fenced the site, installed a clay cap, covered it with top soil, and seeded the cover.

In June 1988, EPA emergency funds were used to design a pretreatment system for water being discharged from the site to the DePere Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Status (August 30, 1990): EPA's pretreatment system for water being discharged from the site to the DePere Wastewater Treatment Plant is operating. A proposed operation and maintenance agreement between WDNR and the City of DePere is being presented to the City Council for approval.

A State court judge has ordered the Bankruptcy Trustee and the operator to remove waste material from the site, as per NR 181 Wisconsin Administrative Code. Waste has not yet been removed. Negotiations are continuing with the Bankruptcy Trustee for removal.

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.