

NPL Site Narrative for DePue/New Jersey Zinc/Mobil Chemical Corp.

DEPUE/NEW JERSEY ZINC/MOBIL CHEMICAL CORP. DePue, Illinois

Conditions at Proposal (April 1997): The DePue/New Jersey Zinc/Mobil Chemical Corp site is located in the Village of DePue, Bureau County, Illinois. The New Jersey Zinc Company began operations in 1903 on 175 acres of farmland. The facility was composed of the original smelter and several associated plants, which were added over the years. The original plant produced slab zinc, used in the automobile and appliance industries, and sulfuric acid. Zinc dust was also produced and used as an additive to produce corrosive-resistant paints. Shortly after the facility ceased operations in 1990, New Jersey Zinc demolished the remaining structures. During the height of operations, the smelter was reported to employ approximately 3,000 workers. New Jersey Zinc Company is currently owned by the Zinc Corporation of America.

New Jersey Zinc constructed a diammonium phosphate (DAP) fertilizer plant in 1966. In 1972, Mobil Chemical Corp leased the DAP and sulfuric acid plants from New Jersey Zinc. Mobil officially purchased a portion of the original property in 1975. In 1985, the ownership of those plants was transferred to Mobil. The Mobil plants were demolished in April 1992.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) involvement in the site began with a preliminary assessment in December 1980. A second preliminary assessment was conducted in July 1983, followed by two site inspections in May 1984 and June 1987. In March 1992, an expanded site inspection was conducted by the Illinois EPA. As a result of the investigations, several sources have been identified: a residue pile, a waste pile, lithopone waste material ridges, a cinder fill area, contaminated soils, lagoons/cooling ponds, and gypsum stack ponds. All of the sources were found to contain elevated levels of metals, including zinc, lead, arsenic, cadmium, chromium, and copper.

Contaminated soils have been identified in residential properties within the Village of DePue. The Illinois Department of Public Health has stated that elevated levels of cadmium were found in residential soil samples. Although the initial health evaluation has documented no short term threats to nearby populations, under certain conditions elevated concentrations of cadmium have been found to pose a number of long term adverse health effects. In addition, contamination of a fishery, state wildlife refuge, and wetlands have been documented in Lake DePue.

Status (May 1999): EPA is considering various alternatives for the 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.