



# Update on Site Activities

## U.S. Oil Recovery Superfund Site

Pasadena, Harris County, Texas

September 2020

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### Current Stabilization and Removal Activities

The U.S. Oil Recovery (USOR) Superfund site (Site) is located at 400 N. Richey Street and at 200 N. Richey Street, Pasadena, TX. In accordance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved work plans, remediation contractors hired by several Potentially Responsible Parties (known as the “PRP Group”) have conducted stabilization activities and completed a series of removal actions at the Site. As part of the stabilization efforts and removal actions, approximately 6.7 million gallons of liquid and approximately 1.29 million gallons of sludge have been removed and transported off-site.

The PRP Group continues stabilization efforts as needed at the Site, under EPA oversight, to protect the public and Vince Bayou. In preparation for Tropical Storm Marco and Hurricane Laura, the PRP Group conducted pump-downs from wastewater treatment plant units to minimize or mitigate potential impact from significant weather. Due to minimal wind and rainfall, no Site impact from the storms was observed.

In July and August 2020, EPA began discussions with the PRP Group to address the remaining aboveground waste at the 200 N. Richey Street property.

### Current Investigation Activities

An administrative settlement between the EPA, the PRP Group, and Bayer Crop Science, Inc. was signed on May 14, 2015. This Administrative Order on Consent (AOC)

is for the preparation and performance of a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) for the 400 N. Richey Street property, within the USOR Superfund Site. The RI/FS field work began in May 2016 and is ongoing with a planned completion in December 2022.

EPA initiated preparations for an RI/FS at the 200 N. Richey Street property, known as Operable Unit 2 (OU-2), in August 2020. EPA will continue the RI/FS for OU-2 unless, and until, a new AOC is signed with the PRP Group to take over such activities.

### Technical Assistance Resources

The national Technical Assistance Services for Communities (TASC) program provides independent assistance through an EPA contract to help communities better understand the science, regulations, and policies of environmental issues and EPA actions. Under the TASC contract, a contractor provides scientists, engineers and other professionals to review and explain information to communities. The services are determined on a project-specific basis and provided at no cost to communities. This assistance supports community efforts to get more involved and work productively with EPA to address environmental issues. For more information, go to <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/technical-assistance-services-communities-tasc-program>.

A Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) is also available to a local citizens’ group to procure the services of a technical advisor to increase citizen understanding of information that will be developed about the Site. By law, only one grant for up to \$50,000 may be awarded to a citizens’ group at any one Superfund site. To be eligible for a grant, a group must incorporate. In addition, the applicant must meet a 20% matching requirement, which may be in cash or donated services. Community groups near Superfund sites may be eligible for technical assistance. If you are interested in applying for this grant, or need additional information, please contact the TAG Coordinator whose information is provided below.

## **Completed Site-Stabilization and Removal Activities**

Due to a threat of uncontrolled releases of hazardous substances into Vince Bayou, EPA began response actions in 2010 to stabilize the Site. EPA removed large quantities of benzene contaminated sludge and approximately 833,500 gallons of contaminated stormwater. EPA identified PRPs who previously sent wastes to the Site for disposal or treatment. On August 25, 2011, the PRP Group entered into an AOC with EPA to take over stabilization activities. The completed activities include: removal and disposal of solid and liquid waste from two frac tanks and more than 230 roll-off containers; removal/disposal and safe demolition of the bioreactor, a large, contaminated aboveground concrete structure on the property; removal/disposal of more than 1,150 containers from within the USOR warehouse; characterization and removal of liquids and solids from over 30 aboveground storage tanks; inventory and characterization of residual liquids and solids in former processing equipment; and final removal of remaining residual wastes from the aboveground storage tanks and former processing equipment. Additional activities included site security, video monitoring, regular Site inspections, and pump down/removal of liquids, as necessary, to prevent releases from containment areas and other structures.

A Removal Action AOC for the 400 N. Richey Street property was initiated in July 2016. The removal activities at 400 N. Richey Street included removal of sludge/solids (mostly hazardous) and liquid wash water from the above-ground storage tanks and processing equipment. The storage tanks and process equipment were also removed. The Removal Action AOC was amended in August 2018 to include a Hurricane Preparedness effort at the 200 N. Richey Street property. Removal activities under the Hurricane Preparedness effort included removal of liquids and solids from four low-lying wastewater units to prevent potential impact due to a hurricane, emptying, and pressure washing the four subsurface containment units, filling and sealing one of the units with concrete and allowing the other three to fill with stormwater. Post removal stormwater sampling from the units in 2018 and 2019 showed accumulated stormwater would not impact the environment.

## **Background Information**

The Site is comprised of two properties, which are located in Pasadena, Texas, north of Highway 225. The property

located at 400 N. Richey Street, is an inactive used oil processor and wastewater treatment facility that began operations in 2002. The MCC property, located at 200 N. Richey Street, was a former wastewater treatment plant owned by the City of Pasadena from approximately 1945 until it was acquired by USOR in January 2009.

## **Where to get more information**

If you would like more information about the Site, visit our website at <http://epaos.org/USOR-PRP> or [www.epa.gov/superfund/us-oil-recovery](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/us-oil-recovery).

Relevant Site documents are available for review at the Information Repository:

### **Pasadena Public Library**

1201 Jeff Ginn Memorial Drive  
Pasadena, TX 77506  
Tel: 713.477.0276

### **Contacts**

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All inquiries from the news media should be directed to the EPA Region 6 Press Office at 214.665.2200 or by email to [R6press@epa.gov](mailto:R6press@epa.gov).



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