



Region 7 Fact Sheet

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May 2014

Time-Critical Removal Action at the Former Western Mineral Products/W.R. Grace Site, Omaha, Nebraska

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 invites the public to review and comment on the proposed decision for Time-Critical Removal Action at the Former Western Mineral Products/W.R. Grace Site located at 3520 I Street in Omaha, Nebraska. The Site is bounded by industrial properties to the east and south, and railroad tracks to the north and west. The Site consists of one building with two segregated areas.

BACKGROUND

Western Mineral Products Site was a vermiculite exfoliation plant owned by W.R. Grace Company. The facility processed a reported 165,000 tons of vermiculite ore between 1967 and 1989. On April 13, 2010, the EPA Region 7 conducted removal assessment sampling to determine the potential for human health effects that might be associated with past, current and future exposure to asbestos related the historic vermiculite ore processing operations at the Site. Sampling included the collection of air (from both interior and exterior locations), interior dust and exterior surface soil samples. Analytical results determined that asbestos was present in the interior air, interior dust and surface soil at the Site.

THE CONTAMINATION

The hazardous substance is amphibole asbestos that was generated as a by-product of the vermiculite ore processing. Asbestos is a hazardous substance defined by section 101(14) of CERCLA and 40 CFR 302.4. Asbestos possess health risks when people breathe fibers present in the air. When inhaled in significant quantities asbestos fibers can cause asbestosis (scarring of the lungs), mesothelioma (a rare cancer of the lining of the chest or abdominal cavity) and lung cancer. Amphibole asbestos fibers were identified inside the building and in soils at or near the surface.

This time-critical removal will allow for excavation, transportation and disposal of contaminated soils that exceed health risk limits for asbestos. The excavated soil will be disposed of at a permitted disposal facility. This removal will also allow for removal of contaminated dust on interior surfaces of the building using High-Efficiency Particulate Air vacuuming, wet wiping and other methods pre-approved by the EPA On-Scene Coordinator.

TIME-CRITICAL REMOVAL ACTION

A time-critical removal action will allow quick removal of asbestos fibers present inside the building and in the surrounding soil. This action

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will reduce the threat to human health and the environment that can come from inhalation of asbestos fibers.

The removal activities will include, but not be limited to the following:

- Implement an EPA-approved Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP), defining the extent of asbestos contamination and estimate exposure potential for current and future land use.
- Prepare a Removal Action Work Plan (RAW) that details plans for the removal and disposal of soil where asbestos may be present in the soil and the indoor environment at the Site at unacceptable levels.
- Sample, identify and characterize all asbestos-containing soils and other hazardous materials.
- Develop and implement an asbestos-specific health and safety plan to address air monitoring and other asbestos-specific issues to assure protection of cleanup workers and surrounding properties.
- Perform air monitoring.
- Excavate asbestos-containing soils located on exterior areas of the Site and arrange for disposal at an EPA-approved disposal facility.
- Take all required actions to facilitate vegetation cutting, surveying, site grading, back filling and revegetation.
- Take required actions to remove asbestos contaminated dust from the building interior surfaces and arrange for disposal at an EPA-approved disposal facility.

The removal action is anticipated to be completed in less than 6 months.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

EPA encourages the community to review the Administrative Record file, which is available at the following location:

Omaha South Library,
2808 Q. Street,
Omaha, NE 68107

EPA Region 7
11201 Renner Blvd.
Lenexa, Kansas

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact

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