

NPL Site Narrative for McCormick & Baxter Creosoting Co.

MCCORMICK & BAXTER CREOSOTING CO. Stockton, California

Conditions at Proposal (February 7, 1992): McCormick & Baxter Creosoting Co. formerly operated a wood-preserving facility at 1214 West Washington Street in Stockton, San Joaquin County, California. The 29-acre site is in a light industrial area near the Port of Stockton. Old Mormon Slough, a tributary to the San Joaquin River, borders the site to the north. Except for an 8-acre portion of the site owned and leased by Southern Pacific Railroad Co. since the 1950s, McCormick & Baxter owns the entire site property.

From 1942 to 1990, McCormick & Baxter treated utility poles and railroad ties with creosote, pentachlorophenol (PCP), and arsenic compounds. Waste oils generated from the wood-treatment processes were disposed of in unlined ponds and concrete tanks on-site. Surface water runoff from the site was discharged to the slough until 1978, when it began to collect in two storm water collection ponds.

In 1983 and 1984, a consultant to McCormick & Baxter found that soils throughout the site were contaminated with arsenic, chromium, copper, PCP, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which are constituents of creosote. Soil contamination extends to depths of 40 feet below ground surface (bgs) in some areas. The consultant's sampling in 1984-88 indicates that the shallow aquifer beneath the site is contaminated with many of the same substances to a depth of 175 feet bgs. Beneath the site, the shallow aquifer is interconnected with the deep aquifer. The deep aquifer within 4 miles of the site provides drinking water to approximately 97,000 people.

In 1989, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (CDTSC) detected arsenic and PCP air particulates on-site. Approximately 105,000 people live and work within 4 miles of the site.

In 1977, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) investigated a fish kill in Old Mormon Slough and the Port of Stockton. The CDFG investigation concluded that the fish kill resulted from PCB-contaminated storm water runoff from the site. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board issued a Cleanup and Abatement Order to McCormick & Baxter in January 1978. In response, McCormick & Baxter installed two storm water collection ponds and a perimeter dike around the site. People currently fish in Old Mormon Slough and the San Joaquin River.

In October 1984, McCormick & Baxter received a permit for a concrete oily-water treatment tank and a drum storage area under Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). With CDTSC approval, the company completed a RCRA clean closure of the permitted units in 1990. The storm water collection ponds are under Interim Status as RCRA hazardous waste management units.

Status (October 1992): The site is being added to the NPL because it satisfies a component of EPA's NPL/RCRA policy: in December 1988, the company filed for protection under Chapter 11 of the Federal bankruptcy code.

In July 1992, EPA emergency staff took measures to improve site security and to inventory chemicals and sludges remaining on-site.

EPA has conducted a search to identify parties potentially responsible for wastes associated with the site and will solicit the participation of those identified in cleaning up 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.