



Facts About...

Rotorex Property, Parcel 74
(Voluntary Cleanup Program)

Site Location

The 42.15-acre Rotorex Parcel 74 property, located at 8301-B Retreat Road in Walkersville, Frederick County, Maryland, is approximately two miles northeast of the City of Frederick in a primarily rural, agricultural area. The property is bounded to the north, northwest and south by the Monocacy River and to the east by agricultural land. Fort Detrick is located across the river. A few residences are located to the east of the property on Retreat Road and Fountain Rock Road.

Site History

The first developed use of the property was as a manufacturing plant for residential air conditioner compressors by Rotorex in 1972. The plant area is limited to a 15-acre portion of the property with access restricted by a fence. The property includes a rail line and an abandoned spur that entered the plant until 1972. The plant was used to manufacture electrostatic air cleaning units for residential applications. Manufacturing processes included machining, painting, and degreasing processes. The degreasing process included the use of solvents, such as trichlorofluoromethane prior to 1990 and 1,1,1-trichloroethane (TCA) to clean and degrease the rotary pump parts via immersion. A chromium rinsing process was also used in preparation for painting. The Fedders plant ceased manufacturing operations in 2001 but continued distribution activities until August 2003 when they began decommissioning the facility.

Environmental Investigations and Actions

In the mid-1990s, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) were detected in groundwater pumped from on-site water supply wells. Additional investigations determined that soils near the two degreaser locations were impacted with VOCs as well.

In April 1996, water samples collected by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) from the water supply system confirmed the presence of TCA, trichloroethene (TCE) and 1,1-dichloroethene (1,1-DCA) above the Maximum Contaminant Levels.

In May 1996 through 1998, additional investigations of soil, surface water and groundwater were completed. VOCs were identified in soils in the vicinity of the parts washer and drum storage areas. Surface water samples identified no contamination in the Monocacy River downstream of the property. Additional samples from water supply wells on the property identified VOC contamination up to 300 feet in depth. Dichlorodifluoromethane and trichlorofluoromethane were also detected in the groundwater.

In 1997, four domestic wells near the property were tested and no contaminants were detected. These four domestic wells are upgradient of the property.



In 2001, a soil gas survey was completed in the vicinity of the parts washers and drum storage area. Twenty-seven soil gas samples were collected that further delineated the extent of VOC contamination beneath the plant building.

In 2006, a Phase II environmental assessment was completed that included the collection of soil, groundwater samples from some of the production wells, and indoor air samples. The samples collected confirmed the presence of TCE in the groundwater, and identified the presence of TCE in the indoor air of the plant building. Four additional monitoring wells were installed and sampled in August 2006 that TCE was present in only one well above the applicable standard.

Current Status

An application and work plan were submitted to the Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) on November 1, 2004 by the Rotorex Company, Inc., the current property owner. Rotorex Company, Inc. submitted the results of the additional investigations in 2006. The VCP completed a review of the application package and accepted the property into the VCP on September 7, 2006 and at the same time notified Rotorex Company, Inc. that a Response Action Plan (RAP) was required to address the environmental concerns at the property. A public informational meeting was held on May 30, 2007. On July 17, 2007, the VCP issued comments on the proposed RAP and is currently awaiting submittal of a revised RAP.

Contact

Jim Metz

Maryland Department of the Environment
Voluntary Cleanup/Brownfields Division

(410) 537-3493

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