



Facts About...

AINSWORTH PAINT COMPANY (Voluntary Cleanup Program)

Site Location

The Ainsworth Paint Company site is located at 3200 Biddle Street, at the intersection of East Biddle Street and Edison Highway, in Baltimore, Maryland. The site is in a mixed residential, commercial and industrial area in the eastern portion of the city.

Site History

The Ainsworth Paint facility was used to produce Fuller-O'Brien paints for more than 30 years before the O'Brien Corporation sold it to Ainsworth in the mid-1980s. Ainsworth, which made paint for boats and ships, stopped production at Biddle Street in 1988 after losing a federal contract and subsequently defaulting on \$1.3 million in city and federal loans.

Environmental Investigations and Actions

Responding to a request from the Baltimore City Office of Environmental Health in early February 1995, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) inspected the Ainsworth Paint site and discovered drums in the rear of the building. MDE determined the site was abandoned and the Waste Management Administration obtained an administrative search warrant and entered the plant in late February 1995 where drums, tanks, vats, and thousands of containers of solvents and paint-related materials were found.

MDE notified the Baltimore City Police and Fire Department and the U.S. Coast Guard, which has federal jurisdiction in Baltimore City. A more thorough search revealed the site also contained a tank farm with underground and aboveground storage tanks containing solvents, manufactured paint stacked on pallets ready for shipment, laboratory chemicals, equipment, furniture, supplies and files.

On February 23, 1995, the Coast Guard requested the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to take the lead on the site. EPA initiated a Removal Action, which was completed on August 25, 1995. A total of 434 55-gallon drums and two sludge boxes of chemicals were removed from the site. Several aboveground and underground storage tanks were also removed. The total cost of the Removal Action was just over \$1.4 million.

After completing the removal action in 1995, EPA gave the site No Further Remedial Action Planned (NFRAP) status after the removal found no evidence of a release. The site has been abandoned since that time, though there has been some fleeting interest in the facility by a number of perspective developers including Johns Hopkins Hospital. In May 2001, four companies agreed to pay a total of \$800,000 to the EPA for cleanup costs at the site. The companies were all customers of the former Ainsworth Paint and Chemical Company.

The site is on the State Master List that identified potential hazardous waste sites in Maryland. The Master List includes sites currently identified by the EPA's Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Information System. The designation of NFRAP by EPA does not mean that MDE



has reached the same conclusion concerning further investigation at the site. The information contained in the fact sheet presents a summary of past investigations and site conditions currently known to MDE.

Current Status

On May 10, 2006, a Voluntary Cleanup Program application was submitted by the Baltimore Development Corporation seeking a Certificate of Completion (COC) as an inculpable party. On July 15, 2009, the Department accepted the Ainsworth Paint property into the program and requested a Response Action Plan (RAP) be completed. The Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment identified isolated areas of elevated levels of several metals, semi-volatile organic compounds, and elevated soil vapor concentrations of volatile organic compounds in the area of the secondary building.

Contact

For additional information, please contact the Land Restoration Program at (410) 537-3493.

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