



# Elkton Sparkler Company (MD0531)

## What You Need to Know

### Site Location

---

The Site is located at 22 Sparkler Lane, near the town of North East, in Cecil County, Maryland. According to Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation, Cecil County, Real Property Data Search, the Site is known as Tax Map 36, Grid 3, parcel numbers 263 and 213 and the current owner of the subject property is Hances Point Holdings, LLC.

The Site consists of two parcels of land, totaling 3.03 acres in size, and is currently used for warehousing. The Site is improved with several buildings and mobile storage trailers. In addition, several mobile storage trailers east of the production building and southeast of the storage building. A wire fence is located along the perimeter of the Site. An unnamed tributary of the Northeast River runs from east to west and dividing the Site into two portions. A bridge over the stream is located north of the storage building. Hances Point Road borders the Site to the West, Sparkler Lane borders the site to the North, Residential properties the Site to the South, North, Northeast, and West across Hances Point Road. The Site accessed from the west via Sparkler Lane.

### Site History

---

Elton Sparkler is a sparkler manufacturing facility that began manufacturing sparklers in the mid - 1940's. In the manufacturing process barium nitrate was used as an oxidizer and mixed with alumina, cornstarch, steel fines, and boric acid to create a coating that was placed on steel wire to form sparklers. In the past, under a permit issued by the State of Maryland, barium waste was disposed of in an onsite surface lagoon.

Since the early 1980's Elkton Sparkler ceased using this disposal practice due to more restrictive state and federal regulations. The lagoon was replaced with a roofed concrete collection basin and the barium waste was collected, drummed and shipped off-site for disposal. The total quantity of hazardous waste disposed of in the lagoon is unknown.

### Environmental Investigations

---

Between 1991 and 2008, a series of soil sampling investigations were undertaken at the site to delineate the extent of soil contamination. Analysis of the soil within the area of the former surface lagoon identified the presence of barium at concentrations as high as 220,000 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg). On July 21, 2008, MDE approved, and authorized the property owner's contractor to implement an Interim Removal Measure Plan (IRMP). The IRMP was carried out between September and November 2008. The activities included removing grossly-contaminated (with barium) soil and an underground heating-oil-storage tank were excavated and removed and three on-site buildings were demolished.

On December 3, 2009, site ownership transferred to Hances Point Holdings, LLC. On January 27, 2010 MDE notified the representative for the property owner that it required specific information before case closure could be issued. This information included:



## Elkton Sparkler Company (MD0531)

### What You Need to Know

- (1) A final copy of the IRMP Report;
- (2) A final round of representative groundwater sampling data (total and dissolved barium) from the on-site production wells and monitoring wells MW-2, -3, -7, -8, -9, -10, and -11. (MDE requested a written sampling plan for MDE review and approval prior to the sampling activities.);
- (3) Written confirmation that a Uniform Environmental Covenant (UEC), with MDE-prescribed conditions and measures, had been recorded for the Site;
- (4) Written confirmation that all un-used monitoring wells at the site had been properly abandoned and sealed; and
- (5) An inventory of all bags, drums, and other containers of process -related chemicals being stored on the Site and the Site owner's plan for disposing of them.

Between February 2010 and February 2013, MDE attempted to work with the property owner and his representatives to obtain the requested items. Despite these efforts, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) initiated enforcement proceedings that year in an effort to compel compliance with the Department's directives. The effort to obtain case closure culminated in 2014 when the property owner complied with MDE's request to record an environmental covenant for the property in Cecil County's Land Records Office.

### Current Status

---

On February 24, 2014, the Department issued a site closure determination when it signed the environmental covenant for the property. The property owner (Hances Point Holdings, LLC) recorded the environmental covenant in the Cecil County Land Records Office on March 3, 2014 (see Book 3541, pages 384-401).