



Facts About...

Marlen Trading Company, Inc. Property
(Voluntary Cleanup Program)

Site Location

The 8.7-acre Marlen Trading Company, Inc. property, located at 4101 Curtis Avenue in Baltimore City, includes a large building and Quonset hut. The site is bounded to the south by a property used by the City of Baltimore Metro Transit Association for storage, to the north by the Corrosion Repair Center, to the east by railroad tracks and to the west by Curtis Avenue with residences beyond. The property to the south was previously occupied by the Maryland Cooperage and Steel Drum Company, a drum manufacturer and cleaner. The land use surrounding the site is mixed industrial, commercial and residential.

Site History

From 1900 through 1918, three properties were transferred to the Maryland Car Wheel Works from the South Baltimore Harbor and Improvement Company of Anne Arundel Company. The Maryland Car Wheel Company and Foundry produced wheels for railroad cars. In 1948, the property was transferred to the Maslow Cooperage Company who in turn sold the property to the United Iron and Metal Company, Inc. in 1949. In 1986, the property was transferred to Bernice Levinson and Lorraine Levin, daughters of the founder of United Iron and Metal Company. Bernice Levinson sold the property to Marlen Trading Company in 1994.

Since 1949, the property has primarily been used by buyers and sellers of scrap metals and other surplus materials. From at least 1951 to 1953, the property was used by the commercial Surplus Sales Company; from 1971 to 1979 by Curtis Steel Products Company and Commercial Aircraft Parts Company; from 1979 to 1987 by the United Iron and Metal Company; and from 1989 to the present by the Marlen Trading Company, also known as Chesapeake Curtis Marlen. In addition to buying and selling scrap metals, Curtis Steel Products and United Iron and Metal Company also bought rolled steel and cut the rolls to customer specified lengths.

Marlen Trading Company has ceased operations and the property is currently vacant.

Environmental Investigations and Actions

One 4,000-gallon gasoline underground storage tank (UST) was discovered and removed in 1995.

In February 1996, a Phase I environmental site assessment confirmed the presence of three USTs (two heating oil and one unknown) and the removal of three USTs (gasoline) prior to the assessment and determined the industrial history of the property was a recognized environmental condition. The assessment recommended a subsurface investigation in the area of the USTs.

The property was the subject of Oil Control Program Case #98-1009BC1, which was closed in December 1997 after three USTs were removed. Two USTs were #2 fuel oil, 6,000 and 12,000-gallons, respectively.



The third was a 1,000-gallon diesel tank. Samples were collected from below the tanks and analyzed for total petroleum hydrocarbons, benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene and naphthalene.

A Phase I environmental site assessment that documented the historical uses of the property was completed in September 2004. Based on the historic use of the property for metals processing, four composite soil samples were collected that identified elevated levels of arsenic in surface soils.

A Phase II environmental assessment completed in January 2005 included the collection of soil and groundwater samples. Analysis included volatile organic compounds, semi-volatile organic compounds, polychlorinated biphenyls, pesticides and metals. Groundwater flow was to the northeast. Analysis of the samples identified elevated levels of arsenic, lead and benzo(a)pyrene in the surface soil at the property. Elevated levels of pesticides were also identified in the landscaped areas of the property. Two aboveground storage tanks currently remain on the property.

Current Status

On March 30, 2005, Marlen Trading Company, Inc., the property current owner, submitted an application to the Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) seeking a Certificate of Completion (COC) as a responsible person for future commercial use for the property. The application was later revised to request restricted industrial use of the property only. The property was accepted into the program on May 20, 2005. The participant submitted a proposed Response Action Plan (RAP) on August 2, 2005 and a public informational meeting was held on August 29, 2005.

On October 20, 2005, 4101 Curtis Avenue, LLC, a prospective purchaser, submitted an application to the VCP seeking a No Further Requirements Determination (NFRD) as an inculpable person. The application was accepted into the VCP on December 5, 2005 and the applicant was informed that the property was ineligible for a NFRD.

The RAP for the property was approved on February 16, 2006. Following implementation of the RAP, the VCP issued COCs to both applicants on June 5, 2006, with restrictions on the use of the property for restricted industrial purposes only; a prohibition on the use of the ground water beneath the property for any purpose; certain soil excavation and disposal requirements; and maintenance requirements for capped areas.

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