

CHILDS PROPERTY SITE (MD-318)
Childs, Cecil County, Maryland

Site Location

Property consists of approximately 1.67 acres located on Childs Road in Cecil County. The property, situated several hundred feet northwest of Little Elk Creek, includes an office building, a warehouse, truck scales, and a 50,000-gallon storage tank. Residential, commercial and industrial properties surround the site and a railroad track crosses the property.

Site History

Prior to development of the site, the land was used for agricultural purposes. From 1949, the property was used in part of the adjacent Elk Paper Company operations (also known as the Barrett Paper Corporation). There is an unconfirmed report of a possible fire at the paper mill around 1960. From 1977 to 1980, Pro-Chem Incorporated operated at the property mixing chemicals to make various products that included glycol-based antifreeze.

In 1981, Paul Mraz, who owned and operated both Galaxy Chemicals and Spectron, a Federal Superfund National Priorities List site, purchased the property. After the purchase, equipment from Spectron was transferred to the property for storage. In addition, Spectron had previously leased a 100,000-gallon storage tank located on an adjacent property. At a public meeting in June of 1989, area citizens reported trucks entering property at mid-night hours. Additionally, they noted that leaking drums were located on truck scales.

Environmental Investigations

As result of public concern, in 1989 the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) conducted a preliminary assessment of the site. Based on the results of the preliminary assessment, it was recommended that a medium priority screening site inspection under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) be conducted. In 1990, MDE developed a sampling plan for the site inspection, but were refused access to property by the owners (Mr. And Mrs. Mraz). MDE obtained an administrative search order to conduct the site inspection and sampling.

Early in 1991 MDE conducted a screening site inspection including sampling of residential wells, soils, groundwater, surface water and sediments. Organic contamination, consisting of styrene and carbon disulfide, was identified in the groundwater of several sampled wells. A commercial well on an adjacent property identified low levels of 1,2-dichloroethene, tetrachloroethane, 1,1,1-trichloroethane and trichloroethane, both in initial sampling and confirmatory sampling. In addition, metals contamination (copper, iron, lead, manganese, selenium and sodium) was identified in groundwater well samples at levels three times greater than the background concentrations. Sediment sampling indicated Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) and metals contamination in Little Elk Creek downstream of the site. Aromatic and poly-aromatic organic hydrocarbons were detected in all shallow soil samples including the background sample. PCBs, pesticides and metals were also detected in the shallow soil samples. None of these detected contaminants could be directly attributed to current or past activities at the property.

In 1999 MDE conducted a site survey of the property as part of the Site Survey Initiative to reassess the status of previously identified sites. The survey determined whether the site

conditions had remained stable, it provided a current site description, identified the presence of new contaminant pathways and enabled the State to determine whether the site required further investigation by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This survey indicated that one building had been demolished at the property and it identified a hand-dug well on the property, but found nothing requiring any further investigation of hazardous waste at this time.

Current Status

This site is on the State Master List that identifies potential hazardous waste sites in Maryland. The Master List includes sites currently identified by EPA's Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Information System. EPA has given the site a designation of No Further Remedial Action Planned (NFRAP). The designation of NFRAP by EPA does not mean that MDE has reached the same conclusion concerning future investigation at the site. The information contained in the fact sheet presents a summary of past investigations and site conditions currently known to MDE.

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