

IRON HILL ROAD DRUM SITE

Elkton, Maryland

Site Location

The Iron Hill Road Drum Site is located in eastern Cecil County, near the intersection of Iron Hill Road and Elkton Road. The property consists of two parcels of land totaling 2.63 acres. The site is bordered on the north by vacant land and a residence, on the south by a railroad and an open field, on the east by a residence and apartment complex, and the west by vacant land. The site is accessible from Iron Hill Road via a paved road.

Site History

Site history prior to 1979 is unknown. In 1979, B&G Association purchased the property and purportedly leased the land to various tenants for light industrial use, including a firm that manufactured plastic manhole covers and a chemical company.

In 1983, the property was leased to Pyronix Associates, Inc. who used the site in their chemical recycling and formulation operations. The operations generated the following types of hazardous waste: halogenated solvents, non-halogenated solvents, ignitable wastes, corrosive wastes, osmium tetroxide, sodium azide, o-chlorophenol, cresols, methanol, phenol, and tetrachloroethane. There are no records indicating when Pyronix Associates, Inc. stopped its operation on the Iron Hill Road site, but the property was found to be vacant in 1987 during a routine hazardous waste inspection. Subsequently, all structures were removed, leaving only the concrete pads.

Environmental Investigations

In 1987, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene conducted a routine inspection of the property as part of its hazardous waste program. The property was locked and vacant with numerous drums visible within the fence. The resulting investigation indicated that the drums contained a variety of hazardous wastes and that some of the drums were leaking. As a result of these observations, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducted a Removal Action on the site under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act program. Approximately 300 drums and 1,100 cubic yards of contaminated soil were removed, and surrounding residential wells were sampled. No contamination was detected in any of the residential wells.

Also in 1987, a preliminary hydrologic evaluation was performed of the site. The results indicated that groundwater contamination from the site could migrate to nearby residential wells. Consequently, 16 monitoring wells were installed during and following the removal activity, two of which were placed to allow detection of contamination prior to its migration to the closest residential well.

In 1988, the EPA sampled all of the on-site monitoring wells and 15 residential wells. Analyses of samples collected from the on-site monitoring wells indicated the presence of chlorinated solvents in the groundwater beneath the property. However, no contaminants were detected in the residential wells. Some solvents were detected in the stream downgradient of the property.

In 1991, the EPA conducted a *Site Inspection* of the property that included sampling and analysis of groundwater from the monitoring wells. Analyses detected chlorinated solvents in some of the monitoring wells. No contaminants were detected in the monitoring wells between the site and the residential wells. Some solvents were detected in the stream downgradient of the property.

As a result of the initial findings of a *Site Survey* in March 1999, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) requested that Cecil County sample three surrounding residential wells and analyze the water for volatile organic compounds. Laboratory analysis of two of the wells did not detect any volatile organic compounds. The county was unable to obtain access to the third well, which was the well closest to the Iron Hill Road site.

In 1999, MDE's Site and Brownfields Assessments/State Superfund Division initiated a three-step process of evaluating the need for additional remedial action at 132 hazardous substance release sites on the State Master List. The Iron Hill Road Drum site is one of the sites on the State Master List. The scope of the environmental site assessment for the Iron Hill Road Drum site included an update of MDE's information regarding the degree and extent of groundwater contamination and a determination if migration of contaminated groundwater had adversely impacted nearby residential wells. The results of the environmental site assessment for this site indicated that chlorinated solvents had impacted the on-site groundwater. The detected amounts exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Levels established by EPA. In addition, MDE determined that the contamination might have moved off the site towards the east in the direction of groundwater flow. However, no chlorinated solvents were detected in any of the nearby residential wells. MDE determined that because the site is vacant, there was no immediate risk to human health and safety. However, groundwater in the area is used for drinking water and, given the potential for future migration of the contamination and potential for future use of groundwater at the site, MDE concluded that further remedial action is required at the Iron Hill Road Drum site.

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 the EPA's Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Information System. EPA has given the site a designation of No Further Remedial Action Planned. The designation of No Further Remedial Action Planned 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.

Facility Contact

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