

Pow-R-Matic, Inc.
Finksburg, MD

Site Location

The Pow-R-Matic, Inc. site is located at 2906 Baltimore Boulevard (MD Route 140), Finksburg, Carroll County, Maryland. The site is located on approximately six acres of land on the western side of Baltimore Boulevard in the Finksburg Industrial Park.

To the north, east, and south of the site are steep embankments leading into the woods. A small, unnamed stream originating from an on-site spring is located at the bottom of the embankment at the north and northeast sides of the facility. The stream flows east into the North Branch of the Patapsco River, which flows into Liberty Lake, the northern part of Liberty Reservoir. The Maryland Paving Company, formerly owned by Phillips Concrete Company, is located to the north of the Pow-R-Matic, Inc. property. Rudy's Restaurant is located off the western corner of the main facility.

Site History

Pow-R-Matic, Inc. began manufacturing heating equipment at the site in 1957. According to site representatives, xylenes were used in the plant processes until 1977 or 1978. A 1983 inspection of the plant indicated that Pow-R-Matic, Inc. still used approximately 30 gallons of xylene per year. Xylene and other waste chemicals were disposed of onto the ground at two locations on the site property.

One of these disposal areas was near two 500-gallon underground concrete storage tanks (USTs), which were removed in approximately 1986. The tanks were used to store waste solvents including xylene, benzene, toluene, methyl ethyl ketone (MEK), acetone, trichloroethene (TCE), ethylbenzene, and methyl isobutyl ketone (MIBK).

Pow-R-Matic, Inc. currently uses a biodegradable cleaning agent called GP66. It is stored in a 200-gallon tank inside the facility and is recycled as needed. Site representatives indicate that GP66 has no hazardous constituents. The property was transferred in 1996 to the current owner, listed as "Route 140, Inc., c/o Philip M. Stamm, Esquire."

Environmental Investigations

In 1983, xylenes were found in the Phillips Concrete Company well. During an October 1983 inspection, Waste Management Administration (WAS) personnel discovered that the plant operations generated approximately 30 gallons of hazardous waste per year. The waste was contained in the two 500-gallon USTs in the northern corner of the facility.

Between 1983 and 1984, samples obtained from two on-site production wells, a leachate seep, the unnamed stream, and the USTs indicated the following: high levels of xylenes (21,000 µg/L, leachate seep) and ethylbenzene (3,600 µg/L, leachate seep).

WAS directed Pow-R-Matic to conduct further studies to assess groundwater and soil conditions at the site, but neither report was deemed adequate by WAS.

In 1986, sampling of one of the USTs at the facility indicated the following chemicals were present: TCE, benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene, MEK, MIBK, acetone, and 2-propanol.

In 1991, an NUS Site Inspection concluded the same contaminants were present in groundwater, surface water, and sediment samples. Additionally, Aroclor 1254 was present at 270 mg/kg in the surface soil at one of the areas historically used for disposal of waste.

In 1994, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) completed an Expanded Site Inspection (ESI) at the site. Two on-site production wells, five residential wells, and four wells from businesses in the surrounding industrial park area were sampled. No residential well or industrial park well samples contained contamination attributable to the site. The Maryland Paving well (formerly the contaminated well of Phillips Concrete Company), previously determined to be impacted by the site, no longer appeared to have volatile organic contamination. Samples collected from the two production wells indicated that ethylbenzene (up to 94 µg/L) and xylene (up to 340 µg/L) were present with lower levels of chlorinated solvents (up to 4 µg/L).¹

Surface water and sediment samples were also collected during the ESI. Xylene was detected at 3 µg/L in the North Branch of the Patapsco River downstream from the confluence with the unnamed stream (and ethylbenzene was detected in its duplicate sample at 1 µg/L), approximately one-half mile downstream from the site. Xylene was not detected upstream of this confluence. A sediment sample collected at the point of emergence of the unnamed stream indicated that ethylbenzene (up to 12 µg/kg) and xylene (up to 48 µg/kg) were present.

The ESI also included the collection of soil samples. A subsurface soil sample (~20 inch depth) collected in the dumping area on the western side of the building indicated Aroclor 1254 at 220 µg/kg, confirming the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls in that location.

A 1999 Site Survey conducted by MDE concluded that further action is required by MDE and that EPA should archive the site. In 2002, an environmental assessment conducted by GeoTrans indicated that a deep bedrock well on-site contained ethylbenzene and xylenes exceeding the MDE groundwater standards, but that volatile organics were below detection limits in the surface water. That same year, GeoTrans also conducted a removal of approximately 6 tons of soil in the area where MDE had determined that PCBs exceeded soil standards.

In 2003, GeoTrans performed a fracture trace analysis, installed two shallow bedrock wells at the downgradient limit of the property, and sampled groundwater and surface water seeps. Results from the two shallow bedrock wells indicated that ethylbenzene (up to 5,800 ppb) and xylene (up to 23,200 ppb) are present at levels exceeding MDE groundwater standards. Low levels of chlorinated solvents were also present in the groundwater. Volatile organic contamination was not detected in the stream.

In November of 2003, MDE samples collected at the former Phillips Concrete plant (now S&G Concrete) show that volatile organics consistent with the contaminants found at the site continue to be present, although at levels below MCLs.

Current Status

It is expected that GeoTrans will conduct another sampling in the summer of 2004 to document decreasing levels of volatiles in the groundwater.

Contact

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