

SUPERFUND FACT SHEET

ARCTIC SURPLUS SITE, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

SEPTEMBER 2002

What's Happening

This fact sheet is a general update on the Arctic Surplus Superfund Site. It provides background information about the site, clean up activities, and the status of negotiations with potentially responsible parties. This sheet describes the site's history and what you can expect at Arctic Surplus in the future.

Site Background

Arctic Surplus Salvage Yard Superfund Site is a privately owned salvage yard located about six miles southeast of Fairbanks. It occupies a 24-acre area on the northeast corner of Badger Road and Old Richardson Highway.

In 1988, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (AK DEC) conducted a site inspection and detected significant levels of metal in the soil. Piles of bulk asbestos and thousands of drums of liquid waste also were found. The on-site groundwater was contaminated with trichloroethylene (TCE) and soil was contaminated with industrial solvents, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and lead. Based on this information, the site was identified as a significant risk to human health and the environment. It was placed on the National Priorities List as a Superfund site in 1990.

The Department of Defense (DoD) owned the site from 1944-1947 and created a small landfill on the property. Salvage operations were conducted by a private company from 1959-1989, when the property accepted military equipment and materials, asbestos insulation, and various oils. Battery cracking and transformer burning also took place to recover metals.

The Tanana and Chena Rivers flow approximately one mile away from the site and could become polluted by contaminants. A shallow aquifer, which underlies the Tanana-Chena flood plain, is the primary source of drinking water for residents living near the site. The 1,000 residents living within a 3-mile radius of the site are dependent on private domestic wells or bottled water.

CURRENT STATUS

About 10 years of groundwater monitoring data has been collected for the Arctic Surplus site. Except for two samples found in an off-site well with low levels (within acceptable levels) of TCE contamination, no off-site migration of chemicals has been traced to wastes stored on-site. A health assessment for the local area suggests that groundwater from Arctic Surplus is not currently a risk to the local population. Today, the remaining

health risks are associated with soil contamination inside the fenced area. A lower health risk is present in a small area outside the site fence boundary.

In 1995 a Record of Decision (ROD) was signed by United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) that chose a remedy for the site. This included stabilization and solidification of soils contaminated with PCBs and lead. These soils are to be placed over an old landfill on-site, in a soil monolith (a low-level, concrete-like mound).

DOD was able to obtain Defense Environmental Restoration Funding to begin some preliminary work this fall. Plans are in progress to complete the final Remedial Action in 2003. A Remedial Process Optimization Scoping Visit Report was completed on August 19, 2002 to maximize the environmental protectiveness of the active restoration projects and to minimize the costs while moving toward the goal of site closeout. Site work completed in September 2002 included additional soil sampling to delineate soil volumes and a stabilization/solidification study. Also, the site fencing was repaired. Shallow groundwater monitoring wells were sampled. Meetings were held in June and September 2002 between DoD, USEPA, AK DEC and site owners to discuss the issues of scrap metal located on the site, lowering the height of the soil monolith and removing the PCB solvent technology currently listed in the ROD.

NEXT STEPS

DoD and their contractors will conduct additional work at the site in October 2002. This work will include additional soil sampling and stabilization/solidification testing. Compressed gas cylinders will be moved to a safe location on the site for testing and eventual disposal. Transformers will be checked and tested for eventual disposal. Surveys will be conducted of spent shell casings and to check for radium paint on instrument dials of scrap vehicles.

Plans are underway to implement the final remedy at the site in 2003. Part of the cleanup plan is to periodically monitor the site. This work will ensure that the proposed cleanup remains protective of human health and the environment. The Department of Defense will conduct the work with oversight from the United States Environmental Protection Agency and Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

If you are interested in learning more about Arctic Surplus, you are encouraged to review the material in the Administrative Record for the Site. It contains all documents related to decisions and actions. The record can be viewed at the following information repository locations:

The Defense Logistics Agency
Building T-5010
¼ Mile Badger Rd

Fort Wainwright, Alaska
(DRMO on Badger Road)

Superfund Records Center HW-078
Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101
(206) 553-4494

If you have questions, please contact:

Neil E. Thompson
USEPA Project Manager
(206) 553-7177

Thompson.neil@epa.gov

EPA also can be reached toll free at (800) 424-4272.

or

Greg Light
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Contaminated Sites Program
610 University Ave.
Fairbanks, AK 99709
Phone: (907) 451-2117

Greg.Light@envircon.state.ak.us

or

Bruce Noble
Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service
ATTN: DRMS-BE
Federal Center
74 N. Washington Ave
Battle Creek, MI 49017-3092
(269) 961-7412 or (616) 961-7412
bruce.noble@mail.drms.dla.mil

To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities. Please contact EPA at one of the numbers above.

Clean Up Actions Completed To Date

Short-term actions: The following short-term clean-up actions have been taken to reduce the immediate risk by addressing soil and groundwater contamination:

- Removal of 22,200 pounds of asbestos and 75 gallons of the pesticide Chlordane (1989).
- Fencing of the site (1989).

- Disposal of the contents of 1,700 drums of liquid waste. Removal and containment of highly contaminated soils. Removal and disposal of additional asbestos (1996).
- Stabilization of areas of contaminated with high levels of lead and PCBs and investigation of potential waste burial areas and sampling (1991). Ongoing sampling of on and off-site wells every six months to monitor for groundwater impacts (1990-91; 1993-97). Sampling was conducted in 1992 and in 2002.
- Clean up of PCBs and lead-contaminated soil along the Badger Road right-of-way (1996).
- Clean up and removal of 3,000 empty drums that contained various waste. Disposal of contaminated cleaning water (1996).

Long-term actions: The following long-term cleanup actions have been taken to permanently clean up and contain contamination across the entire site:

- Beginning in 1992, the Defense Logistics Agency – acting on behalf of the potentially responsible parties – conducted an investigation to determine the nature and extent of contamination at the site.
- In 1995, EPA selected a cleanup remedy based on the results of this investigation. The remedy includes the following activities:
- On-site treatment of PCB contaminated soils.
- Solidification of lead contaminated soils.
- Distribution of newly treated residual soil over the old landfill area and containing the entire area with a cap of clean soil.