

NOAA Hazardous Waste Site Report

Syncon Resins (II-45)  
South Kearny, Hudson, New Jersey  
April 13, 1984

Location and Nature of Site:

Syncon Resins is a five-acre site located in an industrial area along the Passaic River in South Kearny, New Jersey (Figure 1). The facility manufactured resins and varnish products until it ceased operations in 1981.

The owners later filed for bankruptcy, leaving approximately 10,000 drums of resins and solvents, numerous tanks, and two unlined impoundments. Recent sampling indicates that soil and groundwater contamination has occurred.

Crude monitoring wells were installed at Syncon and sampled on May 6, 1982. The samples were analyzed by the New Jersey Department of Health for volatile organics, PCB's, petroleum hydrocarbons, lead, chromium, and other compounds. The results indicated severe contamination of the shallow groundwater aquifer. The contamination plume may represent a single, short-duration, large release such as a spill, or a continuous release such as discharges of wastes into an unlined lagoon. In addition, several possible plumes appear to be located on the site.

A plume consisting of PCB's may exist in the vicinity of sample sites TP-8 and TP-9. A possible source of this plume is the discharge from the small, unlined lagoon immediately upgradient of these monitoring points. A second plume containing toluene, xylene, and ethylbenzene may be found centered around both the large and small unlined lagoons. Samples from these lagoons taken in May, November, and December 1981, are in the ppb ranges. All levels noted are less than 2 ppm. An additional plume of naphthalene, used in the manufacture of synthetic resins, may exist in the vicinity of sample sites TP-2, TP-11, and TP-3. Spillage of this compound on-site is the probable source of the naphthalene plume.

Proximity of Chemical Hazard to Marine Resources:

Syncon Resins lies along the Passaic River which empties into Newark Bay. Future discharges of toxic materials into the Passaic River could occur by two methods. One is by surface runoff from contaminated surface soil and the two lagoons. The other method is by the flow of contaminated, shallow groundwater beneath the site. The flow of groundwater underneath the site is generally towards and with the flow of the Passaic River.

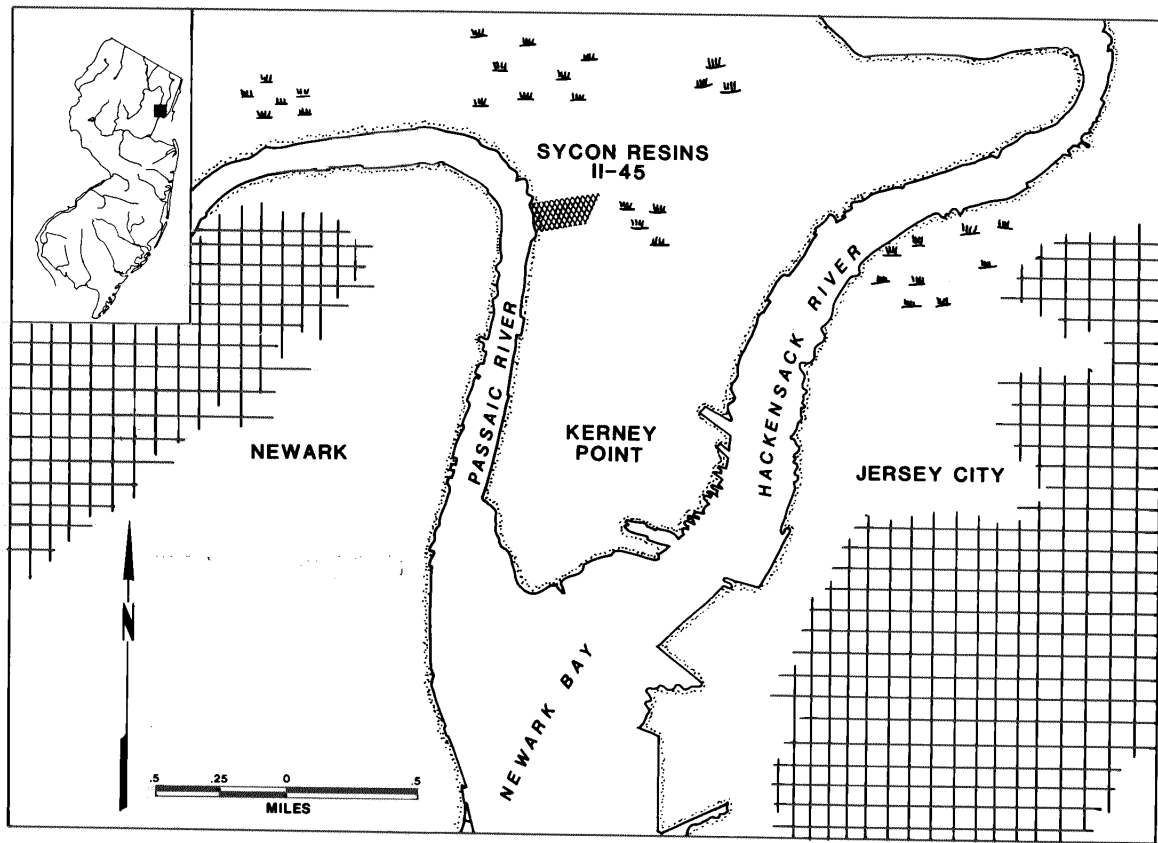


FIGURE 1. Site location.

### Marine Resources at Risk:

The Passaic River supports small runs of anadromous fish but is not a primary spawning or nursery area.

Table 1. Fishery Resources of the Passaic River and Newark Bay (1-4)

<u>Finfish</u> Species	Adult Habitat	Spawning Area	Nursery Area	Comm. Fish.	Rec. Fish.	Migr. Route
<u>Anadromous</u>						
Alewife						x
Blueback herring						x
Tomcod						x
Striped bass			x			x
<u>Non-anadromous</u>						
White perch	x		x			
Flounder	x					
Bluefish	x		x			
Spot	x		x			
Northern kingfish	x					
<u>Shellfish</u>						
Blue crab	x		x		x	

The Newark Bay area is very heavily developed and does not serve as primary spawning or nursery habitat for anadromous fish or shellfish. Some anadromous fish enter this area during spawning runs, and several species of fish are present all year as adults or larvae (2).

There has been a long history of declining anadromous fish runs in New Jersey, dating back to the late 1800's. The Passaic River does not have confirmed runs of any anadromous fish species, and the American shad is considered extirpated from this river (6).

The southwest corner of Newark Bay is a wintering area for many waterfowl, and there is a nesting site for wading birds on Shooters Island (2).

### Summary of Site-Related Actions:

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the town of Kearny have cooperated in efforts at this facility since at least 1962. A cleanup is in progress involving the removal of drums and surface contamination, including the lagoons. Assuming these efforts are accomplished, the likelihood is greatly reduced of contaminants entering the Passaic River and reaching resources of concern. It is not known if a recovery system to deal with the severe groundwater contamination problem will be established.

NOAA Reviewer: Gary Ott, SSC - U.S. Coast Guard District III  
(212)668-7152  
FTS 664-7152

EPA Contact: Richard Katz

References:

1. National Marine Fisheries Service. Anglers Guide to the United States 2. Atlantic Coast.
2. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1982. Assessment of Resources of Newark Bay.
3. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1980. Atlantic Coast Ecological Inventory.
4. Breder, C.N. and D. E. Rosen, 1966. Modes of Reproduction in Fishes. TFH Publications.
5. Research Planning Institute. Environmental Sensitivity Index - New Jersey. Unpublished.
6. Zich, H.E., 1977. The collection of existing information and field investigation of anadromous clupeid spawning in New Jersey. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Misc. Report No. 41.
7. Katz, Richard, 1982. HRS Worksheets U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. July 31.
8. Spayd, Stephen, Memorandums July, 20, 1982, June 4, 1982. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Region I.
9. Environmental Protection Agency, 1951-1982. Portions of Warrenton Report Discussing Aerial Photos.
10. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, 1984. Fact Sheet. Feb. 24.