



Region 7

Iowa
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Fact Sheet

October 2003

First Five-Year Review Completed Mid-America Tanning Superfund Site Sergeant Bluff, Iowa

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducts regular checkups, called five-year reviews, on certain Superfund sites. These reviews are required by the Superfund law [42 U.S.C. § 9621(c)]. EPA Region 7 and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) have completed their first five-year review of the Mid-America Tanning Superfund site near Sergeant Bluff, Iowa. The site is located in Woodbury County, Iowa, approximately 10 miles south of Sioux City and about 6 miles south of Sergeant Bluff.

EPA and IDNR conducted the five-year review to make sure the cleanup remains protective of human health and the environment.

Before the site was cleaned up, the site posed a threat to the public health through direct contact with contaminated soils, building surfaces and impoundments, and through potential migration of chromium into the surrounding ground water.

BACKGROUND

The site is a former leather tannery which operated from 1970 to 1989. Process wastewater containing chromium was discharged to onsite surface impoundments. Chromium contaminated sludge accumulated at the bottom of these impoundments and was disposed of onsite in trenches and in surface soil. When the facility ceased

operations in 1989, there was an estimated 5,000 gallons of chromium tanning solution on site along with 525 gallons of sulfuric acid which was also used in the tanning process.

EPA initiated a removal action in 1990 which included:

- excavation and stockpiling of contaminated sludge from the on-site burial trench,
- containment and treatment of chromium tanning solutions,
- containment and neutralization of sulfuric acids, and
- cursory decontamination of the buildings.

In 1994, EPA issued an Administrative Order to Foxley Cattle Company, a Potentially Responsible Party (PRP), to perform a second removal action to address re-contamination concerns. The removal action performed by Foxley was completed in 1995 and consisted of:

- decontaminating onsite buildings,
- removal and disposal of drummed wastes, and
- securing the site buildings and man-holes.

In 1999, EPA conducted the final remedial action at the site. That work included:

- excavation of contaminated soil, sediment and sludge materials and placement of those materials in landfill areas,
- treatment of free wastewaters located in several site impoundments,
- installation of floating geosynthetic

- covers on existing site lagoons,
- decontamination by steam cleaning of selected site facilities, and
- installation of chain link fencing.

Ground water monitoring showed no contamination of the ground water. Institutional controls were put in place to protect any future purchasers of the site.

FIVE-YEAR REVIEW

EPA and IDNR considered a significant amount of information before concluding the site remains safe. Previous ground water monitoring reports, operation and maintenance reports, site records, and institutional controls were all reviewed, and the site was inspected in April 2003.

Long-term protectiveness of the remedial action will be verified by continuing inspections and maintenance at the site. Previous data indicate no impacts to surface water or ground water from the site. The remedy is functioning as intended, and is protective of human health and the environment.

Two minor issues were noted in the report and recommendations were made:

- to repair any existing damage from vehicle tracks and
- to replace and maintain warning signs in the area north of the covered lagoon to prevent future vehicle track damage to the landfill caps.

Since contaminants remain beneath the caps and in the covered lagoon at the site, and the site's use is restricted due to these contaminants, EPA will conduct another five-year review in 2008.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The five-year review report can be reviewed at the following locations:

Sergeant Bluff City Hall
401 Fourth St.
Sergeant Bluff, Iowa

EPA Record Center
901 N. 5th St.
Kansas City, Kansas

If you have questions or need more information on the Mid-America Tanning site or the five-year review process, please contact:

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