



## Region 7

Iowa  
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## Fact Sheet

August 2003

### **Proposed Plan for Interim Remedial Action Available for Comments**

Railroad Avenue Superfund Site, West Des Moines, Iowa

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is releasing a Proposed Plan for Interim Remedial Action to address ground water contamination within the West Des Moines (WDM) Well Field Area of the Northern Plume of the Railroad Avenue Superfund site in West Des Moines, Iowa. The action will be taken under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, also known as the Superfund Law.

The EPA Proposed Plan recommends interim actions that will help to restore contaminated ground water at this site to its beneficial uses by treating the water.

EPA is asking for public comments on its Proposed Plan. The public comment period runs **August 11 - September 10, 2003**. Although EPA and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) are recommending a proposed action to address the contamination, a final interim action decision will not be made until EPA reviews comments from the public. After the comment period closes, EPA will make a decision, which will be published in a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD will also include a summary of EPA's responses to the comments received during the public comment period.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Ground water beneath the Railroad Avenue Superfund site is contaminated

with tetrachloroethene (PCE), trichloroethylene (TCE) dichloroethylene (DCE) and vinyl chloride. EPA has divided the site into Northern Plume and Southern Plume areas. This proposed plan addresses interim remedial actions for portions of the Northern Plume. Future proposed plans will address final remedial actions for the Northern and Southern Plumes. EPA has not identified the source of the contamination in the Northern Plume area.

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#### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS -**

EPA will hold a **public meeting** to provide information and accept comments on the Proposed Plan. The public meeting will be held:

**Tuesday, August 26, 2003**  
**7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.**  
**West Des Moines Community Center**  
**in the cafeteria**  
**217 Fifth Street**  
**West Des Moines, Iowa**

For more information, please contact:

**Beckie Himes**  
Office of External Programs  
U.S. EPA Region 7  
901 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, Kansas 66101  
Phone: 913-551-7003  
Toll free: 800-223-0425  
[himes.beckie@epa.gov](mailto:himes.beckie@epa.gov)

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The site was first identified in 1993, when a routine water distribution sample showed contamination. EPA was made aware of the site in 1996, after a site investigation was conducted by IDNR. EPA completed remedial sampling in November, 2002.

The Railroad Avenue Ground Water Site was placed on the National Priorities List in September, 2002, making it eligible for cleanup under EPA's Superfund program.

EPA estimates there are currently no significant risks from the site. However, significant potential future risks exist, based on assumptions of individual well water use from the contaminated area.

### **RECOMMENDED REMEDIAL ALTERNATIVES**

The remedial alternatives are:

1. No Action - The National Contingency Plan requires consideration of a no further action alternative against which other alternatives can be compared.
2. Extraction with Recovery Well/Surface Water Discharge - Involves the installation of one recovery well, extraction of the ground water to contain the plume and protect the WDM water supply wells, and discharge of the untreated water to Gravel Pit Lake.
3. In-Situ Stripping Wells - Includes installation of in-situ stripping wells to provide a treatment barrier between the western edge of the contaminant plume and the WDM water supply wells.
4. Extraction with Water Supply Wells/Treatment at Drinking Water Plant - Would use four of the existing WDM water supply wells as extraction wells, upgrade the aerators at the WDM drinking water plant to provide volatile organic compounds (VOC) treatment, replace four existing pumps if needed, treat the extracted ground water at the WDM drinking water plant, and beneficially reuse the treated ground water in the WDM water supply system.

5. Extraction with Water Supply Wells/On Site Treatment/Discharge at Drinking Water Plant - Would use four of the existing WDM water supply wells as extraction wells, construct an on-site treatment plant to remove the VOCs from the extracted ground water, replace four existing pumps if needed, and discharge the treated ground water to the WDM drinking water plant for beneficial reuse in the WDM water supply system.

A complete explanation of the alternatives can be found in the Focused Feasibility Study Report that is included in the Administrative Record.

We propose to select Alternative 4 as our Preferred Alternative, subject to public comment.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Proposed Plan and other site-related documents provide details of the nature and extent of contamination and the work that has been completed at the site. These documents are part of the Administrative Record, available at the following locations:

Wes Des Moines Public Library  
4000 George M. Mills Civic Parkway  
West Des Moines, Iowa

EPA Region 7 Records Center  
901 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, Kansas

If you have questions or need additional information concerning the public meeting or the Railroad Avenue site, please contact:

**Beckie Himes**  
Office of External Programs  
U.S. EPA Region 7  
901 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, KS 66101  
Phone: 913-551-7003 or  
Toll Free: 1-800-223-0425  
[himes.beckie@epa.gov](mailto:himes.beckie@epa.gov)