

Site Fact Sheet
Little Elk Creek
Area-Wide One Cleanup Program Pilot Project
Central Chemical Corporation
Triumph Industrial Park
Elkton, MD 21921

Property Description

The Central Chemical site is located in the Triumph Industrial Park, Elkton, Maryland. The 12.12-acre property is located approximately 0.75 miles southwest of the intersection of the Blue Ball Road entrance to the Triumph Industrial Park.

Property History

Triumph Industrial Park was utilized as a munitions manufacturing facility during World War II. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is unable to determine the exact use of the Central Chemical property during World War II, or the use of the property from that time until 1966. However, pre-1966 blueprints indicate that presence of four small structures and what appears to be a warehouse on the Central Chemical site.

An underutilized industrial park located along the Little Elk Creek in Cecil County, Maryland has been selected as an Area-Wide Pilot Project under U.S. EPA's One Cleanup Program and Land Revitalization initiatives. The goals of the Little Elk Creek Pilot Project is to address a widespread groundwater contamination problem stemming from multiple industrial sources within a geographic area and support development and reuse needs of the surrounding community.

In 1966, Central Chemical Corporation purchased the site from the Elkton Company. During the next few years, Central Chemical Corporation developed the property and constructed the existing buildings and facilities. Following development of the site in the late 1960s, Central Chemical Corporation utilized the facility to mix and hammer-mill dry chemicals including pesticides, fertilizers, and herbicides.

The mixing and milling processes utilized at the facility generated solid waste in the form of waste chemicals and liquid waste in the form of "wash down" water generated from cleaning the equipment. In order to dispose of the solid waste, Central Chemical Corporation installed an industrial waste incinerator (one of the first in the United States). Liquid waste consisted of soapy "wash down" water and was disposed of as non-hazardous waste by a waste removal and disposal contractor.

Environmental Investigations

In 1970, the Maryland Department of Water Resources submitted an order to Central Chemical to cease violations in their handling of wastewater and install an adequate wastewater treatment facility. MDE does not have any records regarding the nature of the violation that resulted in the 1970 order.

In 1987, chlorinated solvents were detected in groundwater samples collected from the production well that exists on the Central Chemical property. The samples were collected as part of the ongoing investigations of the surrounding CERCLA sites (notably G.E. Railcar, W.L. Gore, Thiokol Inc., Crouse Excavation, and the Dwyer Property). As a result of the detection of these contaminants, Central Chemical was placed on the EPA CERCLIS database in September 1989 and on the State Master Lists for further investigation.

In 1989, MDE completed a Preliminary Assessment of the site. The assessment concluded that the detected chlorinated solvent contamination was unlikely to have resulted from on-site activities as no chlorinated solvents were in use in the dry-mixing and milling process and no solvent waste was generated on the property. The assessment further concluded that the detected contamination likely migrated from either the neighboring Thiokol Inc. or G.E. Railcar sites. Central Chemical does not use the contaminated production well and the well house is used to store flammable materials. Given the lack of an on-site source for the contamination and lack of pathways that pose a risk to human health, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) required no further remedial action for the property.

In 1999, MDE conducted a site survey of the Central Chemical site. The Site Survey Initiative was proposed to reassess the status of those sites that were previously designated No Further Remedial Action Planned by EPA. This initiative is intended to determine if site conditions have remained stable, provide a current description of the site, and identify and address any new pathways for contamination. MDE concluded that conditions at the site had not changed since the 1989 Preliminary Assessment and recommended that EPA should not consider any further action at the site, but that MDE would continue to investigate the site as part of the ongoing investigation of the groundwater contamination at Triumph Industrial Park.

Contaminants

Chlorinated solvents have been detected in the ground water beneath the site.

Cleanup and Next Steps

In 2003, Central Chemical ceased operations at the site and put the property up for sale. Aquafin, Inc., a producer of concrete sealing products, is interested in purchasing the property as a manufacturing facility for its products.

In June 2004, Aquafin, Inc. submitted a Phase I and II assessment of the property to MDE seeking a “No Further Action” determination. Based on the information submitted, and a review of the information submitted by General Electric, MDE has concluded that the VOC contamination in the Central Chemical well can be positively attributed to the contaminant plume emanating from the GE property. No other contaminants exceeding industrial standards were reported in the Phase II study. On August 12, 2004, Aquafin, Inc. placed a deed restriction on the land that prohibits the use of groundwater for potable use and prohibits the use of the property for residential purposes. Based on the assessment conducted by Aquafin, Inc. and the recording of the requested deed restrictions, the Department has given the site a No Further Action determination and moved the site to its Formerly Investigated Site category.

Lead Agency and Contacts

MDE is the lead agency for this site and continues to investigate it as part of the overall groundwater contamination investigation at Triumph Industrial Park. Additionally, in accordance with EPA’s RCRA Corrective Action Program, General Electric is conducting an investigation to delineate off-site groundwater contamination, which includes groundwater beneath the Central Chemical property

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