

FACT SHEET



Telex Communications Facility

Lincoln, Nebraska

January 2003

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 is **inviting the public to review and comment on a proposed cleanup plan to address ground water contamination at the Telex Communications facility**, two miles northeast of Lincoln, Nebraska along the south side of NE Highway 6. The proposed plan is to pump contaminated groundwater from two existing extraction wells and treat the extracted groundwater in an on-site air-stripping tower. The treated water would then be discharged to Stevens Creek if it meets the requirements of Telex's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. Operation of this pump-and-treat system will continue until the cleanup goals have been achieved. The operating period is projected to last another 10 years.

Site Background and Risks

The facility manufactures several types of commercial and military antennae, wireless microphones, and communication towers.

Manufacturing processes include metal working (shaping brass and aluminum), circuit board assembly, soldering, defluxing, degreasing, fiberglass molding, painting, and assembly. The property was originally developed by Hy-Gain Electronics, which operated the facility until 1978 when it filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. Telex Communications, Inc. purchased Hy-Gain's assets out of bankruptcy in 1978 and is the current property owner.

In January 1987, the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department detected several volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in facility production wells at levels above drinking water standards. The detection of contamination in site wells prompted Telex, in May 1987, to investigate an on-site unlined surface impoundment which had been used over a number of years as a surface discharge point for facility process waters. This investigation found evidence of contamination in both water being discharged to the impoundment and in area soils. A Site Assessment, completed in September 1988, detected the presence of a second source of groundwater contamination located southeast of the main production building where spent solvents had been disposed on the ground at some point during the life of the facility.

Public Involvement Opportunities

Attend a Public Availability Session

When: Monday, February 10, 2003
Anytime from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Where: Lincoln City Public Libraries
Anderson Branch
3635 Touzalin Avenue
Lincoln, Nebraska 68507

Send Comments

When: Jan. 13 to Feb. 27, 2003

To Whom: Jeff Johnson, Ph.D.
Air, RCRA & Toxics Division
EPA Region 7
901 N. Fifth Street
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

A RCRA Facility Investigation (RFI) determined that the main potential for human exposure at and near the facility is through contact with contaminated groundwater. The main contaminants of concern found in the groundwater at the Telex site are chlorinated solvents typically associated with metal working and degreasing and their breakdown products.

The former surface impoundment was closed in 1989, and two recovery wells were installed on-site in 1990 to begin clean-up of the contaminated groundwater. A third recovery well was added in 1997 to increase the capture zone of the system. Shortly after the addition of the third well, one of the original recovery wells was shut down due to problems with sediment accumulation.

Details of proposed cleanup remedy

An analysis of groundwater contaminant concentrations at the site conducted as part of the RFI determined that the facility's extraction well system has reduced groundwater contaminant concentrations at the site to less than one-tenth its initial concentration. Based upon this analysis, the proposed remedy is to continue operating the existing two-well pump-and-treat system at the current capacity of approximately 300 gallons of water per minute, which can draw in contaminated groundwater from a distance of several hundred feet north of Highway 6. Contaminated groundwater is then pumped into the on-site air-stripping tower. The treated effluent water is then discharged to Stevens Creek, provided it meets the discharge limits in Telex's NPDES Permit.

Operation of the current pump-and-treat system would continue until drinking water standards are achieved throughout the plume, currently projected to take another 10 years. Telex will also continue to maintain the carbon treatment unit at a contaminated domestic well, located about 1000 ft northwest of the Telex property, and supply bottled water to that residence as long as contaminants remain above drinking water standards in the vicinity of that well.

What other remedies were considered?

The following corrective action alternatives were also evaluated but not selected for treatment of contamination at the site.

1. Mechanical excavation and removal of the soils at the Solvent Disposal Area
2. Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) at the Solvent Disposal Area, which involves vacuum extraction of contaminants occurring in the vapor phase
3. Thermally Enhanced SVE at the Solvent Disposal Area, which involves heating of contaminated soil to increase transfer of contaminants into the vapor phase followed by SVE
4. In-Situ Bioremediation within the Solvent Disposal Area, which involves the injection of chemical agents into the subsurface to promote breakdown of contaminants in the soil
5. Dual Phase Extraction within the Solvent Disposal Area, which involves recovery of both contaminated groundwater and soil vapor
6. Installation of an Additional Extraction Well North of Highway 6

7. In-Situ Bioremediation North of Highway 6, which involves the injection of chemical agents into the subsurface to promote breakdown of contaminants in the groundwater.

Public involvement opportunities

A complete description and evaluation of all the corrective measure alternatives considered can be found in the **RCRA Facility Investigation Report** and **Corrective Measures Study Report** in the administrative record for the site. The documents may be viewed at the following locations:

Anderson Branch, Lincoln City Library
3635 Touzalin Avenue
Lincoln, Nebraska 68507
Phone: (402) 441-8540
Hours: Mon. through Thurs. 10 am - 9 pm
Fri. and Sat. 10 am - 6 pm
Sun. 1:30 pm - 5:30 pm

EPA Region 7 Information Resource Center
901 N. Fifth Street
Kansas City, Kansas 66101
(913) 551-7241
Hours: Mon.- Fri. 9am-3pm

EPA encourages the public to review these documents and comment on all the cleanup remedy alternatives. EPA has set a 45-day public comment period from January 13 to February 27, 2002. A public availability session has also been scheduled to give the public an opportunity to discuss the proposed cleanup plan with EPA officials and representatives of Telex (*see details in box on front*). A more formal public hearing has not been scheduled, but will be held if there is sufficient public interest.

Requests for a public hearing must be in writing and must state the issues to be raised. EPA will evaluate any request and hold a formal hearing if it finds that a hearing will contribute to the decision-making process by clarifying significant issues affecting the cleanup remedy. EPA will finalize a remedy only after the public comment period ends and all comments are reviewed. EPA may modify the proposed remedy or choose another one, based on new information and comments from the public.

Questions, comments and hearing requests to:

Jeff Johnson, Ph.D.
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913-551-7849, or toll-free at 800-223-0425

News media and public inquiries to:

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