



Region 7

Iowa
Kansas
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Fact Sheet

May 2004

HAZARDOUS WASTE PERMIT CHANGE IS FINAL

Koch Nitrogen Company, Dodge City, Kansas

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 has made the final decision to change the hazardous waste permit for the Koch Nitrogen Company in Dodge City, Kansas. EPA has changed Part II of the permit to conduct a site-wide investigation that is efficient and protective of human health and the environment.

Koch Nitrogen Company purchased the former Farmland Industries, Inc. facility on May 20, 2003.

POST-CLOSURE PERMIT

This permit is formally known as a post-closure permit. Under this permit, monitoring and maintenance activities take place to prevent or control releases. Post closure activities include:

- Monitoring groundwater to detect any releases of hazardous contaminants.

BACKGROUND

The facility began operations in 1968 as a manufacturer of nitrogen fertilizer, specifically anhydrous ammonia and urea ammonium nitrate. Wastewater containing chromium was produced from the cooling tower blowdown. The wastewater was treated in the chromium destruct unit prior to discharge to the wastewater lagoons. As a result of the treatment, Kansas Department of Health and the Environment (KDHE) required Farmland to implement groundwater monitoring for the unit to detect potential releases to the environment.

Also, the facility had a large spill (about 1,200 gallons) of chromic acid from one of its storage tanks. Farmland notified KDHE in June 1982 that chromium contamination had been discovered in the groundwater of a private well east of the facility. KDHE required Farmland to conduct an assessment of the groundwater under the facility and surrounding property. Since that date, the extent and source of the contamination in the Ogallala aquifer have been partially defined.

In addition to chromium, nitrates and volatile organic compounds have been detected in the groundwater at levels above the maximum contaminant levels for drinking water.

The groundwater contamination has moved beyond the boundaries of the facility to the north, east, west and south. Although the hazardous waste production ended at the site, Koch is responsible for the investigation of soils, sediment/sludge, surface water and groundwater, and continued monitoring and cleanup of the facility. During the Resource Conservation Recovery Act Facility Investigation, which is required by Part II of the permit, the facility will be required to define the vertical and horizontal extent of contamination.

So far, Koch has:

- Installed numerous monitoring/recovery wells to monitor and withdraw the chromium contaminated-groundwater for treatment;
- Discontinued usage of the chromium destruct unit for cooling water treatment;

- Replaced the hazardous chromic acid with a non-hazardous corrosion inhibitor for use in the cooling tower;
- Installed a unit for the treatment of chromium-contaminated groundwater, and
- Installed underground injection control wells to increase the rate of contaminated-groundwater withdrawal without affecting other plant operations.

PERMIT BACKGROUND

Then. . .

EPA and KDHE issued a hazardous waster management permit on March 21, 2003. Shortly thereafter, Farmland appealed both parts of the permit by filing a Petition for Review. KDHE reviewed Part 1 of the permit and denied it. Thus, the permit became effective.

Since Koch purchased the facility, EPA, KDHE and Koch have worked together to resolve all of Koch's issues with the permit. For example, EPA and KDHE agreed to defer some of Koch's work required in Part I of the Permit into the work required under Part II. KDHE changed Part I of the Permit to accomplish this goal.

Now. . .

On January 15, 2004, EPA, KDHE and Koch signed a letter agreement, which included a modified version of Part I and Part II of the permit. The changes to the original permit authorized a formal permit modification procedure. Thus, the revised permit was made available for a 60-day public comment period which started February 16, 2004 and ended April 16, 2004.

EPA and KDHE received two written comments during the public comment period. EPA has prepared a response to both comments. A copy of the response to comments will be located in the Administrative Record at the Dodge City Public Library.

Dodge City Public Library
1001 Second Avenue
Dodge City, Kansas 67801

Contact: Roanne Gable
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact:

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