

FACT SHEET



Northwestern States Portland Cement Co. Site Mason City, Iowa

February 2003

Introduction

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducts regular checkups, called five-year reviews, on certain Superfund sites, as required by the Superfund law. EPA Region 7 recently completed its second, five-year review of the Northwestern States Portland Cement Company Site. The site consists of a portion of the Holcim (U.S.) Inc. (formerly Northwestern States Portland Cement Company and Holnam Inc.) cement manufacturing facility located north of Mason City, Iowa, near the intersection of 25th Street and U.S. Highway 65.

The EPA conducts the five-year review to make sure the cleanup continues to protect human health and the environment. Based on the evaluation of the information during the review, EPA believes the remedy continues to be protective of human health and the environment.

Before cleanup, a byproduct of the cement manufacturing process known as cement kiln dust (CKD), which had been disposed on the site, caused ground water in the area and surface water in Calmus Creek to have high alkalinity and total dissolved solids.

Background

The Holcim facility has manufactured cement since 1908. An area referred to as the West Quarry was mined for limestone, a raw material for cement production, until 1950. In 1969, Holcim began using the

West Quarry for the disposal of CKD. Disposal of CKD in the West Quarry ceased in 1985 and the open portion of the quarry filled with water.

Under EPA oversight, Holcim installed a system to dewater the West Quarry and treat the collected water. An engineered clay cap was placed over the area of the West Quarry filled with CKD. Access to the area is restricted. Holcim continues to maintain the site.

Five-Year Review

The EPA considered a significant amount of information before concluding that the site remains safe. Annual status reports, semi-annual groundwater monitoring reports, and site records were reviewed. The site was inspected in April 2002.

Long-term protectiveness of the remedial action will continue to be verified through continuing inspections, maintenance, and sampling of groundwater at the site. Current data from the site indicate the pumping wells continue to prevent off site migration of contaminated ground water and the collected ground water is effectively treated prior to discharge to Calmus Creek. The cap over the West Quarry continues to be stable and effective at minimizing the infiltration of precipitation. Current monitoring indicates the remedy is functioning as intended and is protective of human health and the environment.

Three issues were noted in the report and recommendations were made to address the scheduling of: 1) future groundwater monitoring, 2) abandonment of three ground water monitoring wells, and 3) future plans for analysis of ground water samples for metals and phenols.

EPA will conduct another five-year review in 2007, in accordance with the Superfund law, since site contaminants remain on site, and the site's use is restricted because of their presence.

For More Information

EPA encourages community members to review the Five-Year Review report for the Northwestern States Portland Cement Co. site at the following information repositories, during normal business hours.

Mason City	
Public Library	EPA Record Center
225 2 nd Street SE	901 N. 5 th Street
Mason City, Iowa	Kansas City, Kansas

If you have questions or need more information on the Northwestern States Portland Cement Co. site or the Five-Year Review process, please contact:

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