

EPA's Five Year Review of the Cleanup at the W.R. Grace Superfund Site is Underway

Boston-- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced today that the third Five-Year Review of the cleanup activities at the W.R. Grace Superfund site in Acton and Concord, MA is currently underway. The purpose of the Five-Year Review is to ensure that the cleanup actions that were selected in the Record of Decision (ROD) for the site are still protective of public health and the environment.

In 1983, EPA listed the W.R. Grace Superfund site on the National Priorities List (NPL) after site investigations revealed extensive soil and groundwater contamination and that hazardous wastes had been disposed of in the Industrial Landfill and several unlined lagoons.

In 1989, EPA signed a Record of Decision (ROD) to address contamination in the Industrial Landfill, soil and lagoon areas as part of work conducted under Operable Units 1 and 2.

The 1989 ROD components include:

- excavating, transporting and off site incineration of highly contaminated material from the Blowdown pit;
- excavating and stabilizing contaminated material in the Blowdown Pit and all lagoon areas by mixing it with cement, lime and fly ash;
- placing contaminated excavated materials from the lagoons onto the landfill;
- covering the landfill with an impermeable cap;
- establishing long term environmental monitoring at each disposal area.

In 2005, EPA signed a ROD to address the final phase of the cleanup. This final phase, called Operable Unit 3, addresses residual groundwater, sediment and surface water contamination.

The 2005 ROD components include:

- Cleanup of contaminated sediment and soil posing an unacceptable risk to human health and/or the environment in both Sinking Pond and the North Lagoon Wetlands;
- Targeted extraction, treatment and discharge of groundwater from the Northeast Area
- Extraction, treatment, and discharge of contaminated groundwater from the former Industrial Landfill Area;
- Construction of a new groundwater extraction, treatment & discharge system. Potential treatment processes for extracted groundwater will include air stripping (for removal of volatile organic compounds, activated carbon (for air & odor treatment), and metals (arsenic, iron, manganese) removal. After treatment, the treated water will be discharged to Sinking Pond.
- Monitored natural attenuation (MNA) in areas of groundwater contamination that will not be captured by the extraction system. MNA relies on monitoring natural processes to cleanup contamination.
- Legal restrictions known formally as Institutional Controls, which may include deed restrictions and/or local ordinances to prevent unacceptable exposures to contaminated groundwater until cleanup levels are met or to protect against unacceptable future exposures to any wastes, left capped on-Site.
- Long-term monitoring of groundwater, surface water, sediment and air as well as performing five-year reviews of the cleanup actions.

EPA has begun the third Five-Year review of the remedy and expects it to be completed by September 2009. EPA will review annual groundwater sampling information to determine the protectiveness of the remedy.

EPA's third Five-Year Review report of the W.R. Grace Superfund site as well as other technical documents will be available for public review at the site Information Repository at the Acton Public Library, 486 Main Street Acton, MA or by appointment at the US EPA Records Center One Congress Street Boston, MA; phone: 617-918-1440.

Site information is also available through the EPA web Superfund at:

www.epa.gov/superfund

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