

SUPERFUND

Fact Sheet

United Chrome Products, Inc.
Corvallis, Oregon



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

June 2003

United Chrome Cleanup Review Completed

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently completed a review of the hazardous waste cleanup at the United Chrome Products, Inc. Superfund site. EPA reviews the site every five years to make sure that the cleanup is effective and that people and the environment are protected as the cleanup continues.

The Five-Year Review of United Chrome confirms that the cleanup is safe and generally proceeding as planned. Even so, higher-than-expected levels of chromium are present at a small area on the United Chrome property between two groundwater wells. To address this problem, EPA will reevaluate the cleanup goals and approach during the next six months.

Cleanup Moves Forward

Overall, EPA finds the cleanup progress at United Chrome to be very successful. Extracting and treating groundwater has greatly reduced the size of the contamination plume. Groundwater cleanup goals have been achieved at 47 of 49 upper zone wells and 15 of 17 deep-aquifer wells.



People and the environment are protected as the United Chrome cleanup continues.

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What Happens Next?

During the next six months, EPA will study the site to understand the causes of high chromium near two groundwater wells. Based on the results, EPA and the City of Corvallis will work together to determine whether cleanup levels for upper soils and groundwater are sufficient to protect deeper groundwater. They will also decide whether the process for extracting and treating the groundwater needs to be improved. When this work is done, EPA will send out a fact sheet summarizing the results. If you would like to join the mailing list for this site, please fill out the form on page 3.

EPA, the City of Corvallis, and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are already working together on next steps. For example, to make sure plants and animals are protected, the City has collected and analyzed data about surface water and sediment quality in drainage ditches.

Site Background

The United Chrome site is a former chrome-plating facility three miles south of Corvallis in the Airport Industrial Research Park. The City of Corvallis owns the 1.5 acre property but had previously leased the property to United Chrome Products, Inc. The company did electroplating at the site for three decades beginning in 1956. During this time, plating tanks and a disposal pit leaked large amounts of hexavalent chromium into soil and shallow and deep groundwater. After determining that the site posed a threat to human health and the environment, EPA placed it on its National Priorities List of the nation's most contaminated sites.

EPA began an extensive cleanup at United Chrome in 1987. The work included removing contaminated debris and hazardous soils, and re-routing a drainage ditch to prevent contaminated groundwater from entering nearby surface-water ditches.

In 1992, the U.S. District Court, EPA, the state of Oregon, and the City of Corvallis signed a consent decree, which requires the City to clean up the site and extract and treat groundwater until cleanup goals are met. In 2000, after studies revealed two additional hot spots with high chromium levels, the City removed almost 2,000 tons of soil and transported it to a hazardous waste treatment facility.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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For people with disabilities: Contact Deborah Neal at 800-424-4372, x0115, if you have special requests for reasonable accommodations. TTY users may call the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339 and give the operator Deborah Neal's phone number.

Visit the EPA Website

www.epa.gov/r10earth/

click on "Index"

click on "U" for United Chrome

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The next fact sheet will be mailed in fall 2003. If you would like to be on the mailing list for the United Chrome, Inc. site, please fill out the form below and mail it to:

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