



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAR 19 1999

OFFICE OF  
SOLID WASTE AND EMERGENCY  
RESPONSE

Robert Markwell  
Environmental Manager  
Beazer East Inc.  
One Oxford Centre, Suite 3000  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Mr. Markwell:

The Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") Office of Solid Waste has received your letter dated January 27, 1999 seeking clarification regarding the application of the EPA Area of Contamination ("AOC") Policy to remediation of wood treating sites. This letter responds to your request and provides clarification to promote the understanding of the AOC Policy among regional and state regulators and its potential implementation at wood treating sites.

EPA's Area of Contamination Policy provides generally that certain discrete areas of generally dispersed contamination – the AOC – can be considered to be RCRA units (usually a landfill) and that consolidation and in-situ treatment conducted within the AOC do not trigger land disposal restrictions. See 63 FR at 28620 (May 26, 1998); EPA, "Management of Remediation Waste Under RCRA" (October, 1998). EPA guidance strongly encourages consideration of the AOC Policy as part of remediation efforts. See attached Memorandum from the Directors of the Offices of Solid Waste, Emergency and Remedial Response, and Site Remediation Enforcement (March 13, 1996); and 63 FR at 65874 (Nov. 30, 1998).

As noted in your letter, EPA has had significant experience with the cleanup of wood treating sites under both the RCRA and Superfund programs. EPA recognizes that wood treating sites often contain large areas of generally dispersed contamination that resulted from the dripping of preservatives from the treated wood onto the ground during and after treatment and storage. These sites can present unusual challenges because of the varying levels and types of contaminants that may be present. EPA believes that wood treating sites can be excellent candidates for the use of AOCs and that AOCs certainly should be considered for use during investigation and remediation activities at wood treating sites where contiguous contamination is present. Moreover, because wood treating sites can have significant areas of generally dispersed contamination, it can be appropriate to consider designation of AOCs expansively, to include in appropriate cases, significant portions of a site in a single AOC. Where contamination is not contiguous, it also can be appropriate to designate more than one AOC at a site.

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I hope that this response meets your needs. If you need additional information, please contact Mr. Robert Hall of the Office of Solid Waste. His phone number is 703-308-8432.

Sincerely, .

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth A. Cotsworth".

Elizabeth A. Cotsworth  
Acting Director  
Office of Solid Waste