



An update on activities at the  
Operating Industries, Inc.  
Landfill Superfund site  
in Monterey Park, California

# OII Update

United States Environmental Protection Agency • Region 9

Fact Sheet #27

October 2002

## SETTLEMENT REACHED ON FINAL REMEDY; IMPLEMENTATION BEGUN

After nearly four years of negotiation, EPA reached agreement in September 2001 with most of the parties responsible for disposing the largest quantities of waste at OII to fund the Final Remedy in the cleanup of the site. The Final Remedy, selected by EPA following public input, is described in the Final Record of Decision which was signed on September 30, 1996. Although it took several years to reach this settlement, remedial action continued at the OII site during the negotiation period. This Update describes the many activities at the Operating Industries, Inc. (OII) Landfill Superfund site since our last newsletter and those which are upcoming. It also includes a brief description of the terms of the Final Remedy settlement. We hope you will find this information interesting and will be encouraged to attend the community meeting scheduled for November 6 at Schurr High School (see box below).

### Eighth Partial Consent Decree

The Eighth Partial Consent Decree (CD-8), the Final Remedy settlement, was approved and entered by the court on May 28, 2002. This agreement primarily involves major waste generators because they disposed of the largest quantities of waste at OII (generally, each settling party individually disposed of at least 110,000 gallons

of waste). Some settling parties agreed to contribute specific funds towards the costs of implementing the Final Remedy; other companies agreed to assume responsibility for implementing the Final Remedy, ensuring adequate financing for the work and paying EPA's oversight costs. All told, the value of CD-8 is estimated to be \$325 million, all of which will be used to ensure the continued safe and effective cleanup of the OII site.

CD-8 ensures that the Final Remedy at the OII site will be fully implemented by parties responsible for disposing of waste. There are five major elements of the Final Remedy. First, it requires the control of landfill liquids at the site perimeter by installing monitoring wells and, if necessary, extraction wells. It also requires the treatment of any extracted liquids at the on-site leachate treatment facility. Second, the Final Remedy requires the remediation of groundwater through the process of natural attenuation (i.e., the natural process by which contaminants become harmless over time and distance). An essential component of the natural attenuation remedy is long-term groundwater monitoring to confirm the remedy's effectiveness. In the event the remedy does not work as expected, extraction and treatment of groundwater will be

### COMMUNITY MEETING

You are invited to a community meeting to discuss the current status of the cleanup process and other issues related to the OII Landfill Superfund site:

**Wednesday, November 6, 2002**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Schurr High School (Cafeteria)**

**820 North Wilcox Avenue**

**Montebello**

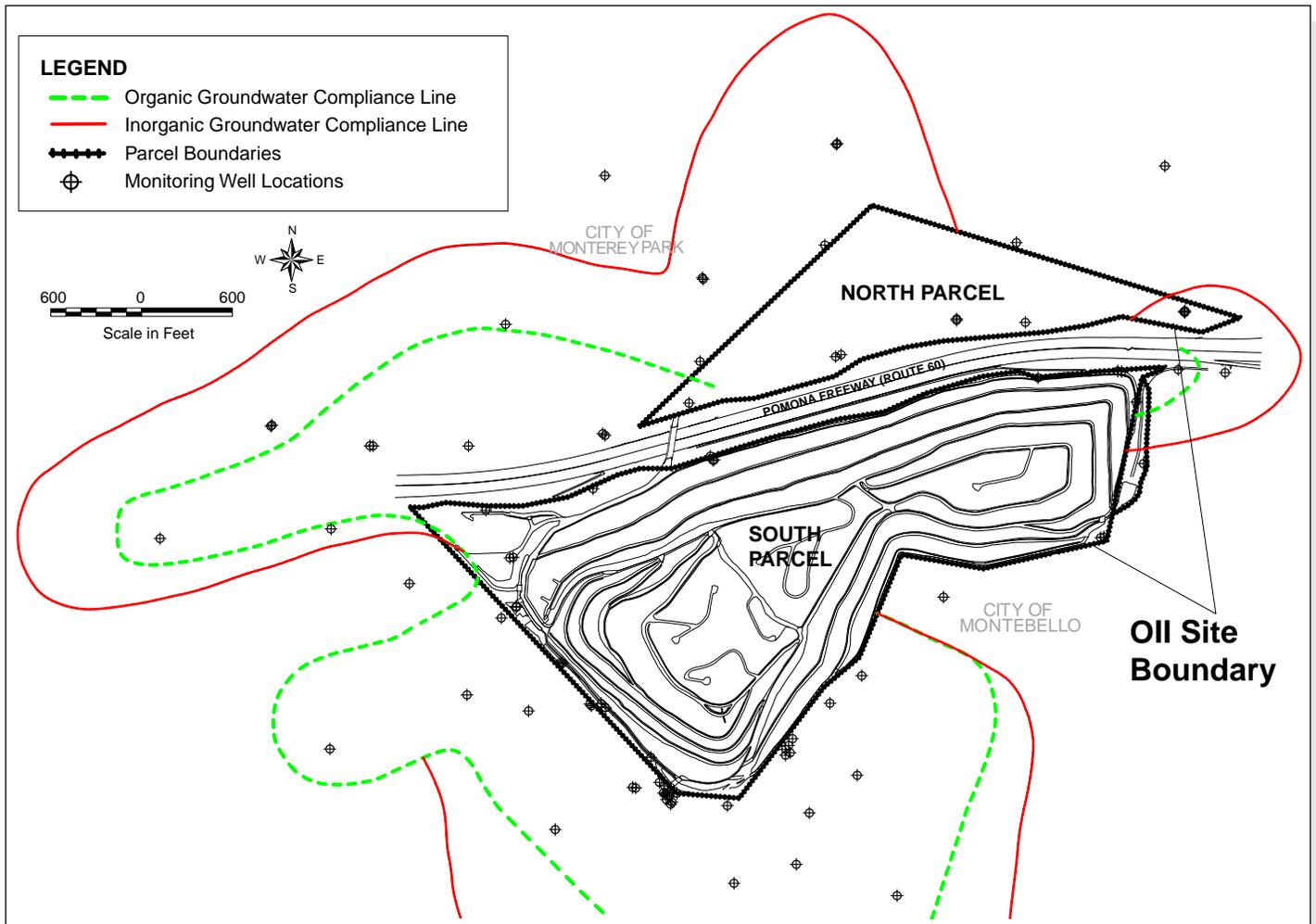


Figure 1: Oil site map showing groundwater compliance lines and existing monitoring wells

required. Third, the Final Remedy requires the on-going operation and maintenance of the leachate treatment facility and all other on-site facilities and environmental control systems. It also requires that site security and general site control and monitoring activities continue. Fourth, the Final Remedy places controls on future use of the OII site to prevent exposure to contaminated groundwater (see sidebar concerning groundwater notices). Finally, the remedy requires the on-going operation and maintenance of the gas control and cover systems as well as the surface water management system. Implementation of the Final Remedy is required to con-

tinue under the terms of CD-8 until all the cleanup standards established for the OII site are met, a process expected to last for many years.

## Remedial Systems and General Oil Site Conditions

### Landfill Cover System

Work on the landfill cover system continues. As the neighbors closest to the OII site are aware, the vegetation planted at the landfill has taken root over the two years since completion of the cover (see Figure 2). Designed to resemble the vegetation on nearby hills, the plants and groundcover turn green and lush during the wet months, and

brown in the summer and fall. Although we are very pleased with the landfill's appearance, site managers are continuously working to improve the vegetation. Over time, we expect the OII site to look even better.

Unfortunately, the cover system installed on the North Slope of the South Parcel (the very steep slope that overlooks the 60 Freeway) has shown signs of cracking. These cracks are not currently affecting the stability of the landfill or the effectiveness of the cover in preventing water from infiltrating the landfill. To maintain the stability and effectiveness of the North Slope cover system, cracks are filled with grout



Figure 2: *Vegetation on Oll's South Parcel*



Figure 3: *Leachate treatment plant and landfill gas treatment system on North Parcel*

(made from sand and clay) as soon as they are discovered. The site managers are watching the North Slope closely so that they may quickly respond to any problems that develop, and EPA is monitoring the situation.

Residents who live near the site will occasionally see road maintenance. These roads are essential for enabling workers to access all areas of the landfill, and they must be kept in good condition to be safe and effective.

### Landfill Collection Systems

There are two substances produced by the landfill that are continuously collected and treated: landfill gasses and landfill liquids (see Figure 3). Landfill gasses form due to the decomposition of trash

### Notice to Owners of Property in Groundwater Monitoring Zone

As part of CD-8, the companies implementing the Final Remedy are required to send notices to owners and occupants of property within the groundwater monitoring zone (also known as the Natural Attenuation Areas) to ensure that no one drills a private well that may pull out water with contamination from the site. If you reside in the area above the groundwater that is being monitored, you will receive such a notice from New Cure, Inc., the company cleaning up the site for these parties.

Note: Please do not be alarmed if you receive one of the notices described above; the notice is strictly precautionary. The groundwater at issue is deep below the surface and is not a threat to your day-to-day life. *Your drinking water does not come from this groundwater, and the groundwater does not come to the surface within these areas.*

and organic materials within the landfill. Liquids accumulate from water percolating through the landfill. This water can pick up potentially harmful compounds and form "leachate."

The gas collection system pulls the gas from deep within the landfill and burns it at the gas treatment system on the North Parcel. As you may recall, this treatment system was built several years ago to take the place of the old, inefficient flare system. It is closely monitored, and the monitoring data confirm that the facility is working better than required. In addition, EPA has approved the use of micro-turbine equipment at the site to generate electricity from landfill gasses. This electricity will be used to operate site systems, saving both energy and money. All emissions from the microturbines are captured and sent back to the gas treatment system to ensure all contaminants are destroyed.

A series of wells and pipes collect leachate and send it to the leachate treatment plant, also located on the North Parcel. Following treatment of these liquids at the plant to neutralize any hazardous constituents, the liquids are disposed in the sanitary sewer. This system continues to operate effectively.

### **Groundwater Cleanup and Control**

Although groundwater in the vicinity of the OII site is not currently used as a drinking water source, it is a natural resource that must be protected. To this end, EPA has approved a long-term plan to monitor the groundwater around the perimeter of the landfill to make

sure that the selected remedy of natural attenuation works as expected and that contaminated groundwater does not continue to spread. The groundwater monitoring plan approved by EPA establishes the required number and locations of monitoring wells to be installed. The monitoring plan also specifies procedures for how the sampling is conducted and how often samples are taken. As a result of the on-going monitoring, EPA currently expects additional monitoring wells to be installed northeast of the North Parcel and on the east side of the South Parcel. In addition, EPA will be looking at hydrogeologic conditions of the aquifer through pump tests and core samples to better understand the potential for contaminant migration. In the event that natural attenuation does not work, EPA may require more wells be installed to pump out water for treatment at the leachate treatment plant.

### **In-Home Air Monitoring and Remediation Completed**

The project to monitor the air inside residences near the OII site has come to an end. Begun in 1993 to make sure harmful gas migrating underground from the landfill did not accumulate in homes, this project involved bi-annual monitoring of the air inside some homes adjacent to the South Parcel. A few homes were found to have landfill gas problems, and remediation systems were installed following the initial 24-hour testing. With the increased gas collection system and capping that occurred on site, the gas in the landfill became far more controlled. For several years prior to

ending the in-home monitoring program in 2001, EPA saw no evidence of an indoor air problem in any of the homes we tested. Subsequently, we removed the gas collection systems in the affected homes and have stopped the periodic random sampling.

To all those residents who participated in the program, we'd like to say thank you very much for your cooperation and graciousness. Although the nature of our house calls was serious, we always enjoyed these visits with the neighbors.

### **What's Going On With the North Parcel?**

Redevelopment of the North Parcel is still in the works. To help facilitate the reuse of this area, EPA is involved in activities to clear the area and make it safe for development. Dirt from the east side of the North Parcel (where the auto wrecking yard was) has been excavated. This dirt will be used for the foundation of a cap which will be placed over approximately 10 acres of the North Parcel...the only location where we believe significant amounts of trash (mostly construction debris) were placed. Unfortunately, after starting some preliminary activities, the redevelopment process has been delayed due to various issues, including the substitution of new private parties responsible for remediating the 10-acre portion described above. EPA continues to work with all the stakeholders in the North Parcel redevelopment process to resolve outstanding issues as quickly as possible.



## INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

Copies of site-related documents and indices of EPA's Administrative Record for OII are available at the libraries listed below. A microfilm copy of the Administrative Record is located at the Bruggemeyer Library.

Bruggemeyer Memorial Library  
318 South Ramona Ave.  
Monterey Park, CA 91754  
(626) 307-1333

Montebello Regional Library  
1550 W. Beverly Blvd.  
Montebello, CA 90640  
(323) 722-6551

Superfund Records Center  
95 Hawthorne St., 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
(415) 536-2000

### EPA Website

For additional information on OII, including all Records of Decision issued for the site, visit EPA's Web site at: [www.epa.gov/region9/waste/sfund/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/region9/waste/sfund/index.html)



## Mailing List Coupon

If you are not already receiving information on the OII site by mail, please return the coupon below. If you have a change of address, please include your old mailing label. Send coupon to:

**Vicki Rosen, Community Involvement Coordinator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9,  
75 Hawthorne Street (SFD-3), San Francisco, CA 94105**



*PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_



## FOR MORE INFORMATION



If you have questions or concerns regarding the Oil site, please contact:

**Vicki Rosen** (SFD-3)  
Community Involvement Coordinator  
(415) 972-3244

or

**Lance Richman** (SFD-7-4)  
Oil Project Coordinator  
(415) 972-3022

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
75 Hawthorne St.  
San Francisco, CA 94105

You may call either of the staff persons listed above **TOLL-FREE at (800) 231-3075**.  
Please leave a message and your call will be returned.



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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX  
75 Hawthorne Street (SFD-3)  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
Attn: Vicki Rosen

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