



# SUPERFUND FACT SHEET

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY • REGION IX • SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

MAY 1998

## EPA Continues Cleanup at Fresno Drum Site

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is continuing the cleanup at the Fresno Drum site, 733 South Hughes Avenue in Fresno, California (see map below). Following last year's removal and disposal of drums and other containers from the site, the current cleanup actions will focus on surface soils on the site and an improperly constructed on-site well. EPA is authorized to perform this work under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), or Superfund, which provides funding for the cleanup of sites that pose a threat to public health and the environment.

### Why We Need To Address Soils and the On-Site Well

The cleanup of surface soils on the site is necessary because sampling results indicated extensive lead contamination to a depth of six inches throughout the site. The maximum lead

concentration is 2,390 parts per million (ppm). EPA estimates a total of 1,624 cubic yards of contaminated soil will need to be removed. For the industrial area at 733 South Hughes Avenue (the Fresno Industrial Supplies facility), EPA will remove soil with lead concentrations of 1,000 ppm or greater, EPA Region 9's industrial cleanup standard. A second property across the street at 700 South Hughes Avenue will have soil removed that contains lead at concentrations of 400 ppm or greater (the residential cleanup standard) because there is more potential for human exposure at this location.

Earlier sampling also indicated that lead migration in and around an on-site well had impacted the groundwater. Lead concentrations in the groundwater were at 208 parts per billion (ppb) at this location.

### Cleanup Actions Planned

An innovative approach to treating lead-contaminated soil will be used at

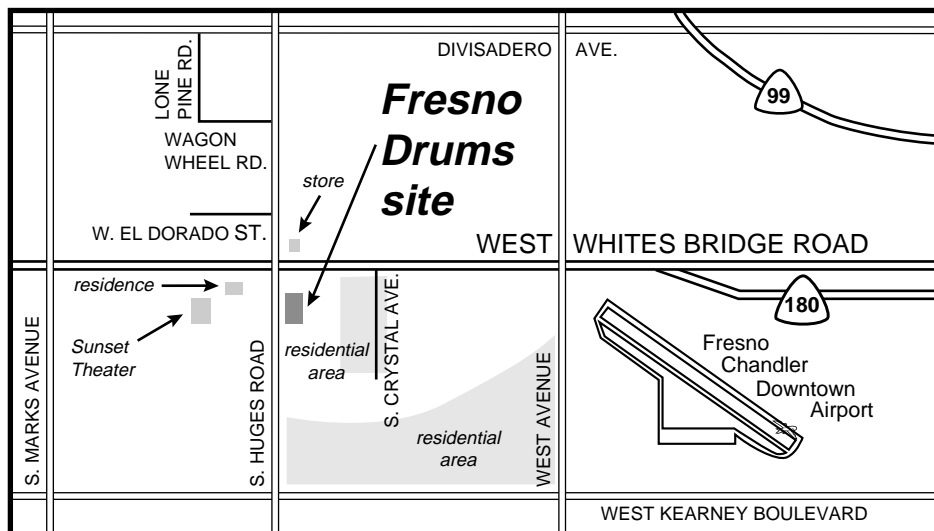
the Fresno Drum site. This will involve stabilization agents that chemically bind with the lead to form a highly insoluble and stable lead compound. EPA has contracted RMT, Inc. to stabilize the lead through phosphate-based chemistry that converts lead into lead phosphate. Lead phosphate is very insoluble and a naturally-occurring form that will be stable in soil. A treatability study using contaminated soils taken from the site showed this process to be very successful at stabilizing the lead against leaching.

The treatment process involves excavating and stockpiling contaminated soils on the industrial site. Chemical additives (calcium phosphate, phosphoric acid and magnesium oxide) will be mixed into the soils using a backhoe. After thorough mixing, samples will be sent to a state certified laboratory to check for stability and make sure the leachable lead concentrations have been reduced to non-hazardous levels. These soils can then be disposed at a municipal landfill or possibly beneficially reused as fill for paved roadway construction or landfill cover material.

The improperly constructed on-site well, which appears to be acting as a conduit for contaminant migration to groundwater, will be properly closed and abandoned.

### Impact on Neighboring Residents

The soil cleanup work is scheduled to begin at the end of this month (May 1998). EPA does not expect the cleanup to affect the daily lives of those who live near the site. Workers will be on site from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. everyday; they may work on the weekends as well. During



map not to scale

(continued on back)

the cleanup, workers will wear protective gear. This is standard practice to protect the health and safety of the workers. Water trucks will be used for dust suppression while soil is being excavated, and access to the open yard will be restricted. This operation will not pose a threat to nearby residents.

## Background

Fresno Industrial Supplies bought and sold military surplus items, including paints and chemical products, over a period of 40 years. It purchased a majority of its chemicals at Department of Defense surplus auction sales. The company closed in 1994.

In October 1995, Fresno County Health Services Agency responded to a complaint alleging abandonment of hazardous substances. In February 1996, the California EPA, Department of Toxic Substances Control conducted a preliminary assessment that showed the presence of hazardous substances and wastes in drums, containers and the soil on the

property. In October 1996, the U.S. EPA conducted its own assessment of the site which verified the State's findings. EPA inventoried 4,556 drums and containers containing flammable, toxic, corrosive and oxidizer wastes. EPA then placed the deteriorated and leaking drums and containers into new containers to prevent additional spillage, collected samples from each and analyzed them for hazardous characteristics. Also, drums and containers stored on the parking lot across the street were moved into the fenced area in preparation for disposal. A soil sealant was applied to exposed surface areas to prevent dust from migrating off the site. In December 1996, EPA proceeded with treatment and disposal of containerized hazardous waste materials. In January 1997, EPA completed the final transportation and disposal of liquid and solid hazardous wastes. Corrosive liquid wastes were treated on-site by an acid/base neutralization process. The soils and groundwater investigation began in April 1997.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information or have questions about the cleanup at the Fresno Drum site, please feel free to write or call the individuals listed below:

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