



EPA

KOPPERS SUPERFUND SITE UPDATE

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY • REGION 9 • SEPTEMBER 2001

INTRODUCTION

Now that the Koppers wood treating facility has closed, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is pleased to announce that it can complete the soil cleanup at the Koppers Superfund Site in Oroville, CA. This fact sheet includes information about completing the soil removal, modification of the Consent Decree, and the status of the groundwater cleanup. A glossary of terms that appear in **bold** can be found at the end of this document.

SOIL REMOVAL WORK TO BE COMPLETED

In 1996, EPA revised the 1989 **Record of Decision** (ROD) for the soil cleanup method at the site with ROD Amendment #1. EPA concluded that the original soil cleanup technologies selected could not achieve the cleanup goals. ROD Amendment #1 changed the soil remedy to allow removal and disposal of contaminated soil in an **on-property** landfill. In 1997 and 1998, the accessible contaminated soil was removed and placed in a landfill built on site. ROD Amendment #1 also called for the removal of the remaining contaminated soil (approximately 20,000 cubic yards) under the wood treating plant when the plant closed its operations. On March 15, 2001, Koppers ceased operations and began working with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control to perform a **Resource Conservation Recovery Act** (RCRA) closure for the facility. The closure procedures are expected to be completed by the end of June 2002. Upon completion of the RCRA closure, Beazer East, Inc., who has **Superfund** site cleanup responsibility, will remove the contaminated soil under the facility and place it in the previously built landfill (See figure #1). It is anticipated that the soil remediation will be completed by end of October 2002.

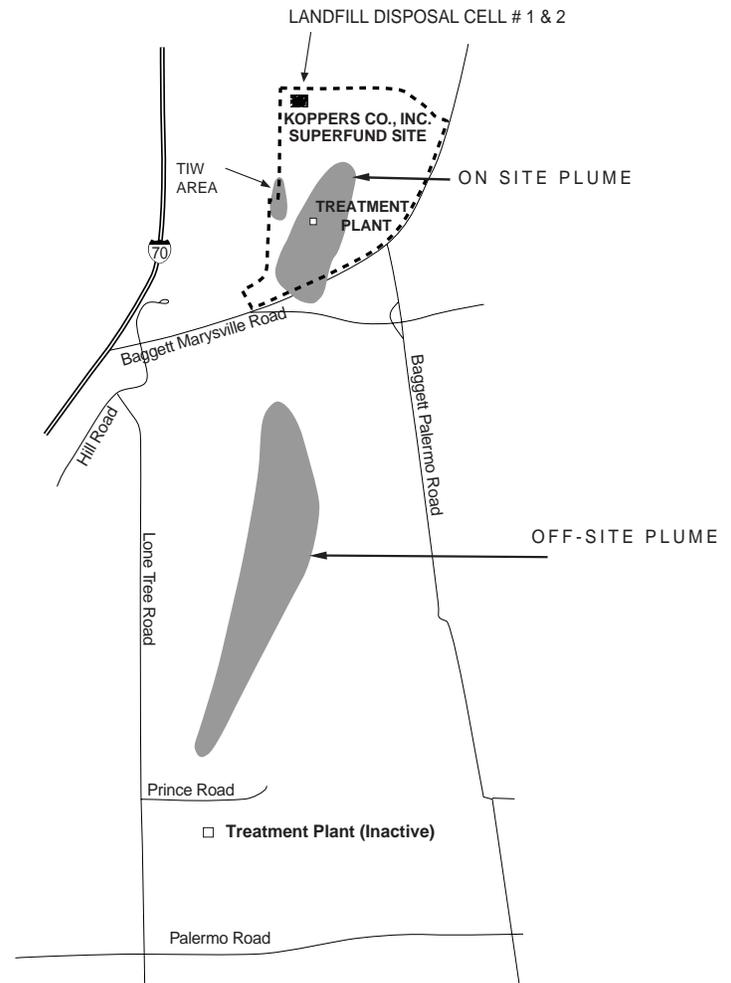
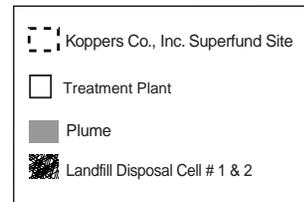


Figure 1: March 2000 Groundwater Plume Map

LEGEND



0 600 1200
Scale in Feet

CONSENT DECREE MODIFICATION TO REFLECT ROD AMENDMENTS

The terms of the original Consent Decree (CD), signed on February 6, 1992, do not reflect the changes in the work resulting from ROD Amendment#1 signed in 1996 and ROD Amendment#2 signed in 1999. A Consent Decree is a legal document, approved by a judge, that formalizes an agreement reached between EPA and potentially responsible parties through which PRP's will conduct all or part of a cleanup action at a Superfund site.

ROD Amendment #1 provided for consolidation of site contaminated soil in an on-property landfill. ROD Amendment #2 called for the issuing of a **Technical Impracticability Waiver (TIW)** for the groundwater cleanup at the former creosote pond and cellon blown areas due to the presence of **dense non-aqueous phase liquid**. It allows the pump and treat remedy to be augmented by enhanced **in-situ bioremediation** and makes provision for monitored natural attenuation, if necessary.

Once negotiations are settled with Beazer East, Inc. and the modified CD is lodged with the District Court, a notice - including a thirty day comment period - will be published in Federal Register (FR). Following the FR publication of the notice, EPA will place an announcement in the city's local paper. The EPA will review and respond to all significant comments. The District Court will review the responses and make the decision to approve or disapprove the legal agreement. The EPA expects the amended CD process to be complete by December 2001.

CONTAMINATION REDUCED, WELLS BACK IN SERVICE

The ground water monitoring report shows that the contaminated groundwater concentrations continue to be reduced. As a result, the EPA has returned another residential well to domestic use. Residents are removed from the water subsidy program when their well, tested for a full year, meets the EPA cleanup standard contained in the ROD. Of the original 38 residential homes who received alternative water source, only seven remain on the water subsidy. EPA continues to monitor the groundwater on a quarterly bases.

SITE BACKGROUND

Since 1948, the 200-acre Koppers Company, Inc. (Oroville Plant) site was used to conduct wood treating operations designed to prevent wood deterioration by insects or fungi. Koppers purchased the plant from the National Wood Treating Company in 1955. The facility closed on March 15, 2001. Chemical and wastewater handling procedures and wood treatment and storage operations have contaminated the soil and groundwater on and off site. Fires at the Koppers facility occurred in 1963 and 1987, causing increased contamination at the site. Groundwater, on- and **off-property** has been contaminated primarily with **pentachlorophenol (PCP)**. Soil on-property has been contaminated with PCP and other hazardous substances used in Koppers' wood treating activities. The contaminated groundwater is located beneath this site and off-property south of the Koppers site. In 1973, PCP was discovered in nearby residential wells that are used as a source of drinking water. In 1988, the Koppers Company, Inc. was bought by the parent company of Beazer East, Inc. (Beazer). Beazer later sold the wood treating plants to Koppers Industries, Inc. (KII) which is the current owner and operator. However, Beazer is the recognized potentially responsible party for Superfund remediation. Beazer has installed both a 600 gallons per minute (gpm) Pump and Treat System for off-property and a 400 gpm P&T for the on-property groundwater contamination and treatment. The off-property P&T was discontinued due to significant progress cleaning up the groundwater. Since 1998, in-situ bioremediation additives have been added to both the off and onsite groundwater **plume** areas to speed up the cleanup.

GLOSSARY

Bioremediation - is the use of microorganisms (such as bacteria) to transform substances into nontoxic compounds

Creosote - is a semi-volatile organic compound composed of numerous polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) used as a wood preservative - some PAHs can cause cancer cPAHs

Dense Non-Aqueous Phase Liquids (DNAPLs) - are liquids that are both not mixable and denser than water such as creosote

In-situ - is a Latin term meaning *in place*; in situ treatment of soil is performed without the need for excavation

Monitoring well - is used to allow sampling for constituent analysis

Off-Property - is an area off the property south of the wood treatment facility owned by Koppers with impacted groundwater (south of Baggett-Marysville Road)

On-Property - is an area on the wood treatment facility property owned by Koppers (north and west of Baggett-Marysville Road)

Pentachlorophenol (PCP) - is an polar organic compound used as a wood preservative which has been shown to increase the risk of cancer in laboratory animals and thus, could possibly be associated with cancer in humans

Plume - is the extent and depth of contaminated groundwater underground

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act - is a program that manages operators that generate and transporters of hazardous wastes

Record of Decision - is a legal document issued by the EPA that provides the remedy actions for cleaning up a superfund site

Superfund - is a program operated under the legislative authority of Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and Superfund Amendment Reauthorization Act (SARA) that funds and carries out the EPA solid waste emergency and long-term removal remedial activities

Technical Impracticability Waiver : is a waiver of the requirement to clean up the groundwater to drinking water standards for certain highly contaminated areas of groundwater near non-aqueous phase liquid. EPA believes it is technically infeasible (unable) to clean groundwater in these areas to drinking water standards

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INFORMATION REPOSITORIES



EPA maintains information repositories that contain project documents, fact sheets and other reference materials.

Butte County Public Library
1820 Mitchell Avenue
Oroville, CA 95966
(530) 538-7641

Meriam Library
California State University at Chico
Chico, CA 95929-0295
(530) 898-5720

Superfund Records Center
95 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 536-2000

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION



Anyone with questions or comments can call Jackie Lane, EPA community involvement coordinator, toll-free at (800) 231-3075 or directly at (415) 744-2267. If you did not receive this fact sheet through the mail, but would like future publications, you can leave you name and address on the toll-free line as well. You can also contact Charles Berrey, EPA's Remedial Project Manager for the site, by calling him directly at (415) 744-2223 or leave a message at (800) 231-3075.

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Attn: Jackie Lane

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