



Halaco Engineering Co. Superfund Site

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency • Region 9 • San Francisco, CA • February 2010

Building Demolition to Begin on February 15th, 2010

Major Testing Effort Underway to Provide Data for Comprehensive Cleanup

Building Demolition

On February 15th, 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) expects to begin demolition of two abandoned, structurally unsafe buildings at the Halaco Superfund Site in Oxnard, California. EPA proposed demolition of the buildings in December 2009.

The project is expected to take approximately two months to complete, and will include the following activities:

- Set up of a temporary office trailer
- Removal and proper disposal of asbestos-containing materials in the two buildings
- Removal of other materials requiring special disposal (e.g., fluorescent lamps, lamp ballasts, treated wood)
- Vacuuming of loose solids and dust from the building floors, pits, vaults, and other accessible locations
- Spraying a sealant on the roof support beams and interior walls to prevent the remaining loose solids from becoming airborne
- Disconnection of utilities
- Dismantling the two buildings and the external air pollution control equipment in a controlled manner using a crane, excavator, bulldozer and/or similar equipment
- Separating the concrete debris, scrap metal, and other building debris for recycling or disposal
- Breaking the clean concrete debris from the buildings into approximately 1 to 1 ½” pieces and placing the debris into the pits and vaults located within the footprint of the two buildings
- Inspecting the scrap metal for contamination and taking acceptable scrap offsite for recycling

WHAT:

Demolition of two abandoned, structurally unsafe buildings at the Halaco Superfund Site at 6200 Perkins Rd. in Oxnard, California

WORK SCHEDULE:

Monday through Saturday, typically 7 AM to 5 PM

WHEN:

From mid-February through April 2010

WHERE:

See Figure 1 for locations

WHO:

Private contractors directed and overseen by EPA personnel

- Testing of miscellaneous building debris to determine the proper method of disposal

The City of Oxnard has generously agreed to assist in removing non-hazardous debris from the site.

EPA will address cleanup of the large waste pile at the site, and the soils, sediments, and water contaminated by Halaco's wastes, in future cleanup proposals.

The “*Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis*” Report, the responses to comments on the proposal (included in the “Action Memo”), and the Administrative Record File for the action are available at the Site Repository as well as EPA’s website:

<http://www.epa.gov/region09/halaco>

To protect the health and safety of the workers and the community, EPA will:

- Remove and/or seal loose materials before demolition begins to minimize dust generation, as described above
- Spray water on portions of the building, immediately before demolition and in areas where debris is handled, to moisten the area to minimize dust generation (The amount of water used will be minimized to avoid surface runoff.)
- Prevent runoff of dust suppression water and rainfall through the use of sandbags, plastic sheeting, minor surface grading, temporary storage, or other measures
- Set up temporary air monitors and frequently monitor dust levels in at least four locations around the property, and change dust suppression efforts as needed to control airborne dust
- Strictly limit access to the property and provide security patrols to prevent trespassing during non-work hours

The work will be completed by private companies under contract to the EPA, and directed and overseen by EPA personnel. EPA will not be demolishing the office building or other structures at the site as part of this action.



Testing Effort Underway to Provide Data Needed for Comprehensive Cleanup

In October 2009, EPA began testing needed to determine which portions of the site need cleanup and how best to clean up each area. The testing, part of the Remedial Investigation for the site, includes the collection and analysis of over 900 soil, sediment, soil vapor, surface water, groundwater, and/or air samples at the site. Most samples are being analyzed to determine the concentrations of metals, the primary site contaminants. Some samples are also being analyzed for organic contaminants, ammonia, and other inorganic chemicals. In October and November, EPA and its contractors installed most of the planned groundwater monitoring wells and completed about 15 % of the planned testing. Testing resumed in early January, but was suspended after significant flooding affected the area the week of January 17. EPA subsequently inspected the site and confirmed that the flooding did not have a significant impact. EPA expects to resume work in March, weather permitting. The remaining work includes the installation of the remaining four groundwater wells, and the collection and analysis of soil, soil vapor, sediment, water, and air particulate samples.

This phase of testing should be complete by July 2010. After analysis of the test data, EPA will evaluate cleanup options and prepare a cleanup plan for an initial portion of the site. Separate evaluations will be completed for other parts of the site in 2011 and/or 2012. Cleanup is likely to be needed of the smelter property, the waste management area, the Nature Conservancy property, the lagoon area, and the groundwater. Additional testing will be needed in some of these areas.

The testing is described in detail in two technical documents available on EPA’s website: the “Field Sampling Plan” and “Quality Assurance Project Plan.”



Figure 1: Buildings to be demolished

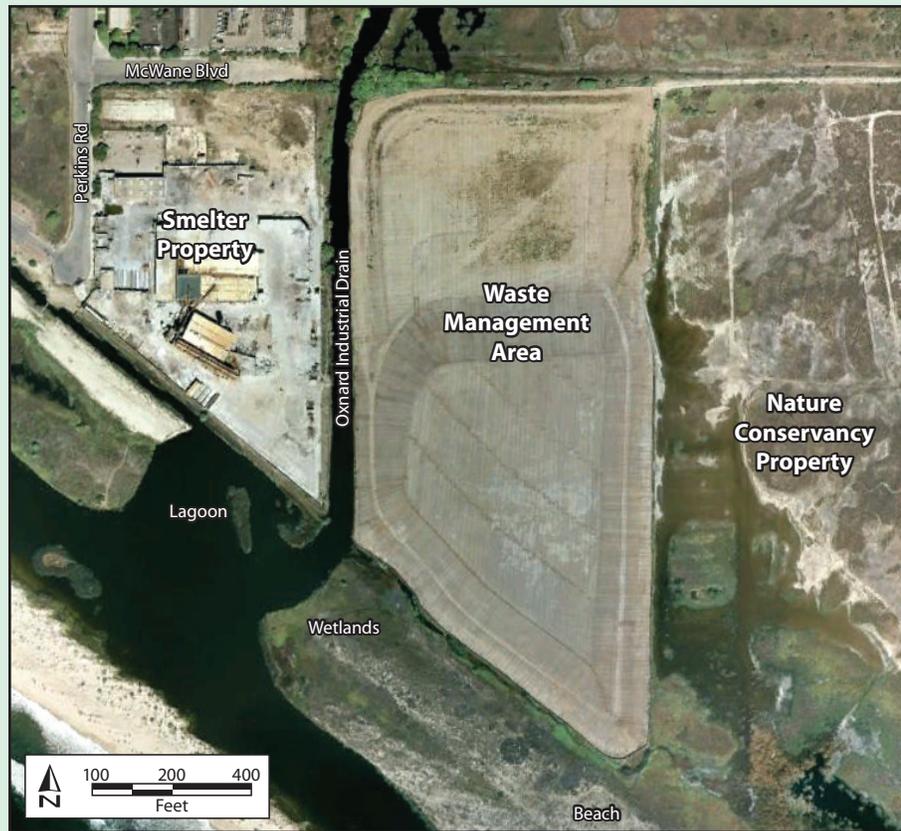


Figure 2: Halaco Site Location and Features

The environmental effects of the Halaco Site are mostly confined to the 37 acre area to the east of Perkins Road where Halaco operated and disposed of industrial wastes. Some of Halaco's wastes are also present in the Nature Conservancy property to the east, and in the Oxnard Industrial Drain and lagoon area.

Chronology of Site Events

| | |
|------------------|--|
| 2006-2007 | EPA completed \$3 million stabilization effort |
| Sept 2007 | EPA added the Halaco Site to the Superfund List |
| 2008-2009 | EPA completed Community Involvement Plan, Groundwater Study, Screening-level Risk Assessment, EPA Testing Plan, Sampling and Analysis Plan, Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis, and began soil and water testing |
| 2010 | EPA to demolish two abandoned, structurally unsafe buildings, complete soil, sediment, soil gas, water, and air testing, and begin development of a cleanup plan for a portion of the site |
| 2011-2012 | EPA to complete additional testing and develop cleanup plans for other portions of the site |

Site Background

Halaco Engineering Company operated a secondary metal smelter at 6200 Perkins Road in Oxnard, California from 1965 to 2004, recovering aluminum, magnesium, and zinc from scrap metal. EPA added the abandoned facility, and the adjacent areas of contamination, to the Federal Superfund list in 2007.

The site includes the privately-owned 11-acre smelter property where the abandoned buildings are located, and the adjacent 26-acre waste management area where a large waste pile remains as a legacy of Halaco's operations. Immediately adjacent to the site is a portion of the Ormond Beach wetlands, which provide critical habitat for wildlife, including several endangered or threatened species.

During its 40 years of operation, Halaco produced a large quantity of waste. The primary wastes were metals and metal salts left over from the smelting process. From about 1965 to 1970, Halaco discharged waste into unlined earthen settling ponds in or adjacent to the Oxnard Industrial Drain. From about 1970 to 2002, Halaco discharged wastes into unlined earthen settling ponds east of the smelter. An estimated 700,000 cubic yards of waste remain on-site.

In 2002, Halaco filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy. In 2006, after Halaco ceased its operations, the bankruptcy was converted to a Chapter 7 (liquidation) bankruptcy. Future use of the properties is uncertain.



Figure 3: EPA testing in the Halaco Waste Management Area in October 2009

Why can't EPA clean up the site now?

Why is more testing needed? Why can't EPA clean up the site now? Cleanup of the Halaco Site is likely to cost tens of millions of dollars. To make sure that the money is properly spent, EPA needs additional information about the types, levels, and extent of contamination at the site.

Specific questions that must be answered before cleanup can occur include:

- Does the waste pile need to be removed to address the health risk posed by contaminants in the waste?
- Are the wastes contaminated with dioxins or other organic contaminants in addition to metals?
- Are buried wastes in contact with and contaminating groundwater? Are they still reactive and capable of generating ammonia and other gases?
- How far has contaminated groundwater beneath the property moved offsite?
- Are the risks to wildlife posed by wastes in the Ormond Beach lagoon high enough to justify excavation of the wastes, and the short-term impacts that that excavation would have on wildlife?
- What is the extent of contamination in the Nature Conservancy property and in the lagoon?

EPA's stabilization effort in 2007 addressed immediate health risks at the site. A 2009 study by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) identified dirt-bike riding and other activities that generate significant dust in contaminated areas as another immediate health concern. EPA has worked with the property owners and the City of Oxnard to post warning signs and discourage trespassing into contaminated areas.

Testing: When and Where?

In October and November 2009, EPA and its contractors installed 12 shallow wells (known as piezometers) and 12 deeper groundwater monitoring wells at the site to determine the extent to which Halaco's wastes have contaminated groundwater. Nine wells were installed through the waste pile, two wells on the smelter property; one well along Perkins Road; and 12 piezometers along McWane Blvd. Surface water samples were also collected from the Oxnard Industrial Drain, Lagoon, and other areas to determine if Halaco's wastes are present in the water. Solid waste samples were collected for geotechnical analysis to help evaluate remedial options for the waste pile.

When EPA resumes work in March (weather permitting), soil and soil gas samples will be collected from the smelter property and waste management area to determine the extent and types of contaminants and if the buried wastes, and remnants of the former Oxnard municipal dump, are still reactive. Soil and sediment samples will be collected from the Oxnard Industrial Drain (OID), lagoon, wetlands and beach areas, and Nature Conservancy properties to delineate the area and depth of contamination. EPA will also test air particulate matter to determine if waste materials are blown offsite during periods of high winds, complete a second round of surface water and groundwater sampling, and sample plants, insects, fish and possibly other biota for contaminants to more accurately determine the ecological risks to wildlife.

EPA Field Effort: Summary of Planned 2009/2010 Testing

| Environmental Media | Area | No. of Samples |
|----------------------|--|----------------|
| Soil/Sediment | Smelter parcel | 173 |
| | Waste Management Area | 95 |
| | Nature Conservancy property | 137 |
| | OID, lagoon, and wetlands | 203 |
| | Beach and other | 50 |
| Soil Gas | Waste Management Area and smelter parcel | 12 |
| Surface Water | OID, lagoon, Nature Conservancy property and other areas | 76 |
| Groundwater | sitewide | 136 |
| Air | sitewide | 30 |

Technical Assistance Grant (TAG)



As part of the EPA Superfund program, EPA offers a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) of up to \$50,000 to assist community groups in interpreting site-related technical information. In October 2009, EPA awarded the grant to the Santa Barbara Channelkeeper (<http://www.sbck.org>). The money will be distributed over a three-year period. EPA encourages other groups interested in working with SBCK to contact:

Kira Redmond, Executive Director
(805) 563-3377 ext.1, kira@sbck.org

For more information about the TAG program, please contact Alejandro Díaz at (415) 972-3242.

For More Information

Site Repository

South Oxnard Branch Library

4300 Saviers Rd.
Oxnard, CA. 93033
(805) 385-8129

Hours: Mon. - Thur 9:00 am - 8:00pm
Sat 9:00am - 5:30pm

EPA Superfund Records Center

95 Hawthorne St., 4th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 536-2000

Hours: Mon - Fri: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm



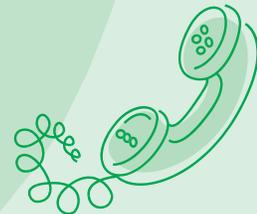
How to Contact Us

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More information is also available on the EPA Region 9 website, <http://www.epa.gov/region09/halaco>

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