Department of the Environment

Facts About...

OLIN CHEMICAL PROPERTY (VOLUNTARY CLEANUP PROGAM)

Site Location

This 20.69-acre property is located at 5701 Pennington Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21226 in an industrial area of Baltimore City. There are several abandoned buildings on-site. To the north of the property is the abandoned American Recovery facility and several additional light industry facilities. To the south is Cabin Branch Creek. To the east is an unnamed tributary to Cabin Branch Creek, beyond which lies a small tank farm. To the west is Pennington Avenue and ¼-mile beyond is the closed Pennington Avenue Landfill. Overland flow from the site and surrounding area discharges directly into Cabin Branch Creek on the southeastern border of the site or into the unnamed tributary of Cabin Branch Creek on the northeastern portion of the site. Groundwater likely flows south/southeast towards Cabin Branch Creek.

Site History

Activities on the property (Parcels A and B) began in the mid to late 1800s with fertilizer and pesticide sales and storage which changed to production of agricultural chemicals. In 1925, Standard Wholesale Phosphate and Acid Works began operations on-site producing sulfuric acid. In April 1949, the site was purchased by Matheson Chemical and continued the production of sulfuric acid. The name changed to Olin Matheson and later to Olin Chemical Corporation and they continued the production of sulfuric acid. About 1958, twenty 5-gallon metal pails of parathion were buried in a pit on Parcel B. In 1963, the production of sulfuric acid on Parcels A and B ceased and structures were demolished/dismantled down to the foundations.

Environmental Investigations

In November 1982, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene observed the excavation of the test pits in the suspected parathion disposal area. Soil sample results indicated 3-60 parts per billion (ppb) parathion and less than 1,000 ppb carbon tetrachloride, tetrachloroethene, and other volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Later investigations indicated trace concentrations of parathion in National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System outfalls.

The March 1983 NUS Corporation Site Inspection was conducted to investigate degradation of the unnamed tributary to Cabin Branch Creek and to investigate the buried parathion containers. Samples indicated parathion ranging in site soil from less than 5 parts per million (ppm) to less than 10 ppm. Elevated lead, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), phthalate acid esters, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and chloroform were also detected. Asbestos, mercury, and various chlorinated solvents were handled on-site.

The 1999 Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Site Survey had further requirements for the investigation of hazardous waste and recommended that the site be considered for detailed Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) investigations. The EPA concurred and recommended that the MDE perform an Expanded Site Inspection.

In April 2003, MDE performed an Expanded Site Inspection on behalf of the EPA. Field activities included the collection of soil, sediment, surface water, and groundwater samples for analyses. Sampling results did not indicate the presence of parathion in site soil or groundwater. Lead, mercury, and arsenic were detected at concentrations above nonresidential standards in site soils. Pesticides and PCBs were detected in site sediments above federal standards. Groundwater results indicated that metals and pesticides were detected above standards. MDE recommended further requirements for the property. The toxicological evaluation indicated a risk associated with the ingestion of site soils and groundwater.

The March 2004 Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment Report by TPH Industries, Inc. used direct push technology to collect soil and groundwater samples on Parcels A and B. Analytical results indicate lead concentrations above nonresidential soil standards at one location and VOCs above groundwater standards at one location.

Current Status

On May 11, 2005, Pennington Partners, LLC submitted a Voluntary Cleanup Program application for the property seeking a No Further Requirements Determination as an inculpable person. The application package is currently under review. Future use for the property will remain industrial with no anticipated changes at this time.

Contact

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