

FACT SHEET

SDMS Document



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REMEDIAL INVESTIGATION/ FEASIBILITY STUDY



Virgin Island /Island Chemical Site
Christiansted, St. Croix, U.S Virgin Island

EPA
Region 2

December 1994

PURPOSE OF FACT SHEET

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is planning to conduct a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) at the Virgin Island Chemical Superfund Site (the Site) in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. The purpose of the RI/FS is to characterize the nature and extent of contamination at the Site, if any.

This fact sheet includes a brief Site history, a description of current proposed RI/FS activities, and information on places to visit and persons to contact for additional information.

PUBLIC MEETING

EPA is holding a public meeting to present the Work Plan for the RI/FS on January __, 1995 at the University of the Virgin Island, at 7 p.m. All interested parties and Christiansted area residents are welcome.

SITE BACKGROUND

The Island Chemical/Virgin Island Chemical Site is an approximately 3.5-acre facility located in the southwest portion of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. The surrounding area is predominantly commercial, with five businesses located adjacent to the site and the closest resident located

approximately 0.1 mile to the south. An intermittent stream, River Gut, which originates north of the site and discharge to the Caribbean Sea, borders the northern and eastern Site boundaries.

The Site is owned by Charles H. Steffey, Inc. The Site has been leased to various chemical manufacturers throughout its history. On May 1, 1969 Steffey leased the property to Houston Chemical Industries, Inc. Houston Chemical assigned the lease to Caribe Chemical Company Inc., (subsequently known as Pierrel America, Inc.) on March 20, 1972. On June 30, 1978 Pierrel America assigned the ground lease to Cooper Laboratories, Inc. (Cooper). On October 30, 1979 Cooper assigned the lease to its subsidiary, Island Chemical Company (ICC). On November 1, 1979 Cooper sold all of the stock of ICC to the predecessor of Berlex Laboratories, Inc. (Berlex). On September 14, 1984, ICC sold its assets to Virgin Island Chemical Company (VICC). The facility was used for the manufacture of pharmaceutical chemicals, primarily phenacetin, ethoxyquin, and quinidine. VICC produced benzyl acetate, which is used in perfumes, flavorings, resin, lacquers, printing inks, and varnish removers. In 1985, VICC also began producing benzyl salicylate, which is used as a perfume fixative, as a solvent for synthetic musk, and is an ingredient in suncreening lotion. The Site is currently inactive.

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The Island Chemical Site was proposed to be added to the EPA's *National Priorities List (NPL)* in January 1994. The NPL is the nationwide list of hazardous waste sites that qualify for federal Superfund cleanup.

PAST RESPONSE ACTIONS

In September 1984, ICC hired a consultant to conduct an investigation of the Site. Three areas of concern were identified during the investigation, including an 8,000-gallon process pit, the associated drainage line from the pit to River Gut, and contaminated soil at various areas on-site. Soil samples collected between September 1984 and March 1986 indicated the presence of various organic compounds, including elevated levels of toluene and pyridine. All contaminated soil detected during the Site investigation was reported to have been either removed or treated on-site using biodegradation through soil manipulation. On September 9, 1985 and on March 13, 1986, two separate Resource Conservation and Recovery Act enforcement inspections were conducted by EPA in order to verify the effectiveness of soil remediation. Samples were collected on both occasions. The analytical results of these samples indicated the presence of phthalates, benzene, chloroform, and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, along with chromium and zinc.

REMOVAL ACTION

On January 31 and February 1, 1989, the EPA conducted a preliminary assessment and removal evaluation at the Site. At that time the laboratory/warehouse building was found to contain approximately 400 drums, some extremely deteriorated, leaking cylinder of chlorine and hydrogen chloride, and over 800 containers of laboratory reagents that included sodium metal, potassium cyanide, and ethyl ether. EPA removed 205 55-gallon drums, 40 85-gallon drums, and 9 5-gallon drums of various chemicals, and 8,061 pounds of lab pack chemicals from the laboratory/warehouse buildings.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

On September 29, 1994, EPA, Island Chemical Company, and Berlex Laboratories, Inc. entered into an Administrative Order on Consent, Index No. II CERCLA-94-0401

(the Order). The Order required Berlex and Island Chemical Company to conduct an RI/FS for the Site according to EPA guidelines and with EPA oversight. The RI/FS field activities will be conducted by Harding Lawson Associates and Caribbean Hydro Tech, contractors for Berlex.

UPCOMING FIELD ACTIVITIES

EPA has approved a Work Plan that outlines field activities to be conducted during the RI/FS at the Island Chemical Site. The RI will consist of a soil and ground water investigation to provide data regarding the soil and ground water quality.

The soil investigation will include sampling and chemical analysis of 10 shallow and deep soil samples. These soil samples will be collected in the vertical intervals from land surface to the top of the water table.

The groundwater investigation will include installation of five monitoring wells to measure groundwater levels and to collect groundwater samples. The monitoring wells will be sampled during two distinct groundwater sampling events. Water level measurements and survey data will be used to determine the direction of groundwater flow at the site.

A risk assessment will then be performed using the data generated during the RI. The risk assessment is used to evaluate the potential risk to human health and the environment associated with current conditions. If the risk assessment indicates that the site pose a risk, then a FS will be prepared to outline and evaluate alternatives for cleaning up the Site.

The field work for the Site is expected to begin on January 13, 1995 and continue until July, 1995. The RI/FS will continue throughout the winter and spring.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information about the RI/FS activities at the Island Chemical Site, please contact:

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Sherrel Henry
Remedial Project Manager
U.S.EPA, Region II
26 Federal Plaza, Room 737
New York, New York 10278
(212)264-8675

or

Lillian Johnson, Chief
Community Relations Branch
U.S.EPA, Region II
26 Federal Plaza, Room Room 1147
New York, New York 10278
(212)264-7054

or

Cecil A. Williams
Environmental Specialist II
Department of Planning and Natural Resources
Water Gut Homes-1118
Christiansted, St. Croix
U.S. Virgin Island 00820-5065

If you would like to be added to the mailing list for the Site and receive future fact sheets, please send your name and address to Lillian Johnson.

INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

Site-related documents regarding the Island Chemical Site are presently available for review at the following repository:

The University of the West Indies Library
Christiansted, St Croix
U.S Virgin Island, 00820

Contact:

Hours:

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