

Combe Fill South Landfill

New Jersey

EPA ID#: NJD094966611

EPA REGION 2

Congressional District(s): 11

Morris

Chester and Washington Townships

NPL LISTING HISTORY

Proposed Date: 12/1/1982

Final Date: 9/1/1983

Site Description

The Combe Fill South Landfill consisted of three separate fill areas comprising 65 acres on a 115-acre parcel of land between Chester and Washington Townships. The site operated as a municipal landfill from the 1940s until 1981 and was licensed to accept domestic and non-hazardous industrial wastes, sewage sludge, septic tank wastes, chemicals, and waste oils. In 1978, Combe Fill Corporation (CFC) bought the landfill. While under CFC management, procedures at the landfill violated many of the New Jersey solid waste administrative codes. CFC went bankrupt in 1981, before the landfill was properly closed. A citizens' group, one of two formed by residents who were concerned over disposal practices at the site, sampled the groundwater, leachate, and surface water and found them to be contaminated. Testing indicated that the fill material consists mainly of highly decomposed rubbish, and that no hot spots or localized sources of hazardous substances could be located. Contaminants have seeped into the aquifer beneath the site. The area surrounding the site is semi-rural. Nearby Trout Brook is used for fishing and recreational activities. Approximately 170 people live within 1/2 mile of the landfill. Most of the residents use private wells as their source of drinking water. Vegetable and grain crops, orchards, and horse farms are located near the site. In 1986, EPA and the State selected a containment remedy for the site. The containment remedial action has been completed and the site is now undergoing operation and maintenance.

Site Responsibility: This site is being addressed through a combination of Federal and State actions.

Threat and Contaminants

Groundwater beneath the site is contaminated with VOCs. Prior to the remedial action, contaminated surface runoff drained into Trout Brook.

Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in two stages: an immediate action and a long-term remedial phase focusing on remediation of the entire site.

Response Action Status

Immediate Action: The State provided in-home water treatment systems to residents potentially affected by groundwater contamination.

Entire Site: In 1986, EPA and the State selected a remedy that included: (1) providing an alternate water supply system for affected residents (2) covering the landfill with clay or a synthetic material to prevent surface water and rainwater from coming into contact with the buried wastes; (3) installing a system to collect the landfill gases; (4) pumping the shallow groundwater and leachate and treating it prior to discharge into Trout Brook; (5) installing controls to accommodate stormwater runoff and seasonal increases in precipitation; and (6) performing an additional study to determine if the deep aquifer needs treatment. The design for the landfill was completed in June 1992. Construction activities have been completed and the site is now undergoing operation and maintenance. EPA and the State were involved in litigation with the potentially responsible parties to recover past costs incurred at the site. In October 2003, NJDEP procured a contractor to conduct RI/FS activities for the deep aquifer study, however, EPA assumed the lead for a study of the deeper aquifer at the site in July 2009. An ESD was issued in April 2006, to explain the modifications in the gas venting system, from an active to passive system. Planning efforts are also being undertaken to install a waterline to residential properties affected or threatened by site-related ground water contamination.

Cleanup Progress

The Combe Fill South construction work was substantially completed on September 20, 1997. The groundwater extraction and treatment system has been operational since June 1997 and the project is currently in the operation and maintenance phase.

The most recent sampling of potable wells indicated that the levels of contaminants in the groundwater are decreasing and, as a result, the installation of the alternate waterline may not be necessary. However, a deep aquifer study is currently ongoing to determine the current state of the groundwater.

EPA and the State recently settled negotiations with the potentially responsible parties to recover past and future costs related to the site. A consent decree was filed with the U.S. District Court on June 16, 2009.

EPA assumed the lead for a study of the deeper aquifer at the site in July 2009, and has selected a contractor to perform the work. Planning efforts are also being undertaken to install a waterline to residential properties affected or threatened by site-related ground water contamination.

Site Repositories

Chester Public Library 250 West Main Street Chester, New Jersey 07930

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 290 Broadway - 18th Floor - File Room New York, N.Y. 10017-1866