Bally Groundwater Contamination Site

Bally Borough, Berks County, Pennsylvania

U.S. EPA INVITES PUBLIC COMMENT ON CLEANUP PLAN FOR THE BALLY GROUNDWATER SITE

EPA Announces Cleanup Plan

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is announcing the availability of its Proposed Remedial Action Plan (PRAP) for addressing 1,4-dioxane contamination in the Bally public water system. The public is invited to review the PRAP and provide comments to EPA.

The PRAP evaluates several alternatives that EPA can use to address 1,4-dioxane contamination in the Bally public water supply. The contamination is the result of past operations at the former Bally Engineered Structures (BES) Facility. The BES Facility is the source of contamination at the Bally Groundwater Contamination Superfund Site (the Site). The Site is located in Bally, Berks County, Pennsylvania.

EPA evaluated two alternatives to address the 1,4-dioxane contamination present in the Borough of Bally's public water system. The alternatives included:

1. **Installing** a new municipal supply well in a location not contaminated by the site;

2. **Providing** additional treatment at the current municipal supply well to reduce 1,4-dioxane in the existing water supply system to acceptable levels.

EPA prefers Alternative 1: Installing a new municipal supply well.

What is 1,4-dioxane?

1,4-dioxane is a clear liquid that dissolves in water at all concentrations. It is used primarily as a solvent in the manufacture of chemicals and as a laboratory reagent. 1,4-dioxane also has various other uses that take advantage of its solvent properties. It is a trace contaminant of some chemicals used in cosmetics, detergents, and shampoos. However, manufacturers now reduce 1,4-dioxane from these chemicals to low levels before these chemicals are made into products used in the home.

For more information on 1,4-dioxane:

www.atsdr.cdc.gov

Description of Alternatives

Alternative 1

A well site has been identified north of the Borough, located outside of the Bally Superfund Site contamination area. This option would include the construction of a new municipal supply well at the well site and construction of a pipeline to convey the water to the Bally public water system. In addition, the Site ground water monitoring plan would be modified, and a contingency plan would be developed, to make sure that the new well remains free of contamination from the Site.

Alternative 2

EPA would oversee the design and construction of an additional water treatment system at the current municipal well. The current municipal supply well would continue to be the water source for Bally. Water from the current municipal supply well would continue to be treated by the existing air-stripper treatment system, but would also be treated by an additional treatment system to reduce 1,4-dioxane concentrations to acceptable levels.

As mentioned above, based on the results of the Focused Feasibility Study, which the Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) for the Site prepared to address in this issue, EPA has selected Alternative 1 (new municipal supply well), as the preferred remedial alternative.

EPA WANTS YOUR INPUT!

- ✓ **A Public Meeting will be held on Thursday, March 22, 2007 from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the Bally Firehouse, 537 Chestnut Street, Bally, PA.** EPA will discuss the cleanup alternatives listed in the PRAP and accept comments.

- ✓ **A Public Comment Period will be held between March 13, 2007 and April 11, 2007.** During this time, you may send your comments in writing to: Mitch Cron, EPA Region 3, 1650 Arch Street (3HS22), Philadelphia, PA 19103, or via email to: cron.mitch@epa.gov.

Site History

The Bally Groundwater Contamination Superfund Site consists of an area of groundwater contamination in and around the former Bally Engineered Structures (BES) plant in the Borough of Bally, Pennsylvania. In 1982, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources discovered organic solvent contamination in Bally Municipal Well No. 3. The well was taken out of service shortly thereafter.

Currently, to address the contamination, water is being pumped from the well and treated by an air stripper to remove Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) before it is discharged to the municipal water supply system. The source of the contamination is thought to be the former BES facility. BES manufactured urethane-insulated panels for refrigerating and was located approximately 1,000 feet from Municipal Well No. 3. The company and its predecessor used lagoons on the property to dispose of spent solvent waste from at least 1960 to 1965. By 1966, the lagoons were backfilled and the area was used for vehicle parking.

In February 2003, the compound 1,4-dioxane was identified at low concentrations in the Bally municipal water system. This contaminant is not removed by the air stripper currently in place. This situation was discussed with local residents during March 19, 2003 public meetings. The Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) for the Site was tasked to prepare a Focused Feasibility Study (FFS) to evaluate options to resolve this issue.

Next Steps

Attend EPA's Public Meeting

A public meeting will be held during the public comment period to explain the PRAP and allow residents to ask questions and submit comments. Your comments will become part of the official transcript for the meeting.

Submit your comments

If you can't attend the meeting, you may still send your comments to EPA during the 30-day public comment period. (see box to the right).

EPA Responds

Following the 30-day comment period, EPA will consider and respond to all comments in a responsiveness summary. The responsiveness summary will be included in the final amendment to the Record of Decision (ROD) which will address 1,4-dioxane at the site.

Review the PRAP

Copies of the PRAP and other Site-related documents are available for review at the following locations:

- U.S. EPA Region 3, 1650 Arch Street, Docket Room - 6th Floor, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Call for an appointment, (215) 814-3157.
- On the Internet: www.epa.gov/arweb. To find the documents, select 'PA' for State, 'Bally Groundwater Contamination' for the Site Name, and 'Remedial' for AR Type. Click on 'Search' and then 'Search Results.' The PRAP is near the end of the list.

Questions? Please contact:

Mitch Cron
Remedial Project Manager
U.S. EPA – Region 3
1650 Arch Street (3HS22)
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 814-3286

Alicia Walls
Community Involvement Coordinator
U.S. EPA – Region 3
1650 Arch Street (3HS52)
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 814-3135

Toll-free: **1-800-553-2509**,
Extension 43286 or 43135

EPA Update on the Bally Groundwater Contamination Site

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Attn: Alicia Walls (3HS52)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103