



# EPA Public Meeting to Discuss Cleanup at Mercury Refining Site

Community Update

April 2008

## MERCURY REFINING SITE

### PUBLIC MEETING APRIL 22

- A public information meeting will be held on April 22, 2008 to discuss the proposed plan for cleanup activities at the Mercury Refining Superfund site. This meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Fuller Road Firehouse, 1342 Central Avenue, Colonie, New York 12205.

## CLEANUP PROPOSAL

- EPA's preferred plan will address contaminated soil, sediment and groundwater at the site.
- Since EPA took the lead on this site, our main goal has been to assess and, ultimately, carry out the best remedy possible to cleanup all the components of this property to the benefit of the surrounding communities.

## PUBLIC MEETING ON APRIL 22

Representatives of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will hold a public information meeting on April 22, 2008 to discuss a plan to clean up the Mercury Refining Superfund site located at 26 Railroad Avenue in Colonie, New York. The site includes the Mercury Refining Company (MERECO) property and portions of the following adjoining properties: the Allied Building Products Corporation property, the Diamond W. Products Company property, the Albany Pallet and Box Company property, and a portion of the unnamed tributary to Patroon Creek, located just south of the property.

## PROPOSED PLAN

Under EPA's Proposed Plan, on-site mercury contaminated soils which are shallow and accessible would be excavated and disposed of off-site. Contaminated soils which are deeper and less accessible would be treated on-site. The treatment technology specified by the plan locks in and prevents the mercury contamination from spreading into groundwater. The plan also calls for removal of contaminated sediment from an unnamed tributary to the Patroon Creek, which receives stormwater from the Mercury Refining property. The sediment would be dewatered and disposed of at an off-site landfill.

## SITE HISTORY

MERECO was founded in 1955 and accepted mercury from mercury batteries and other mercury-bearing materials, such as thermometers and dental amalgams. The recovered mercury was then refined and marketed.

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**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COORDINATOR**

- Kristen Skopeck is the Community Involvement Coordinator for this site. She is located in Hudson Falls, New York and can be reached at 518-747-4389. Please call Kristen with any questions or concerns. She can be emailed at [skopeck.kristen@epa.gov](mailto:skopeck.kristen@epa.gov)
- Comments about this site can be mailed to Tom Taccone at 290 Broadway, 20th Floor, NY, NY 10007, or emailed to [taccone.tom@epa.gov](mailto:taccone.tom@epa.gov)
- Residents are encouraged to attend the public meeting to hear about the proposed cleanup plan for the site and to get questions answered.

**SUPERFUND**

- For more information on the Superfund program, visit <http://www.epa.gov/region02/superfund>.

**SITE HISTORY CONTINUED**

Before 1980, waste contaminated with mercury was dumped over an embankment of the unnamed tributary to Patroon Creek. Contaminated stormwater drained off the site into the Creek. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) sampled the area around the tributary in the early 1980s and found polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and mercury contamination on the southern edge of the property and the embankment of the tributary.

In 1983, EPA placed the site on the National Priorities List of the most contaminated sites in the country. In the mid-1980s, MERECO was directed by NYSDEC, which served as lead agency at the time, to investigate and remove certain areas of soil containing mercury and PCBs. Clay and asphalt/concrete caps were placed over the excavated area. NYSDEC directed MERECO to conduct several additional investigations in the 80s and 90s to determine the full extend of mercury contamination in the soil, groundwater, and sediment and to evaluate potentially suitable corrective measures for addressing the contamination. In 1999, at the request of NYSDEC, EPA took over as lead agency and initiated and completed a remedial investigation and feasibility study of the site. The study, which was planned using past data that was collected before 1999, generated additional data to complete the characterization of the site. EPA's Proposed Plan is based on this data and analysis.

**COMMENT PERIOD**

A 30-day public comment period on the Proposed Plan begins March 30, 2008. EPA will select a final remedy for the site after reviewing and considering all information submitted during the public comment period. Interested individuals can send comments to: Thomas Taccone, Remedial Project Manager, Environmental Protection Agency, 290 Broadway, 20th Floor, New York, New York, 10007-1866, or [taccone.tom@epa.gov](mailto:taccone.tom@epa.gov)

