United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Additional Cleanup Work and Long-Term Study to Begin

Ten-Mile Drain Site
St. Clair Shores, Michigan June 2010

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's work at the Ten-Mile Drain site will soon move from the removal response phase to a long-term Superfund investigation and cleanup phase. EPA's "remedial" staff will begin a comprehensive investigation to fully determine the extent of the contamination. Agency remedial staff works on long-term cleanup projects. The emphasis will be on finding the source and cleaning it up to stop the potential for re-contamination. A lot of cleanup work and sampling has been done in previous investigations, but a source has not been found. Consequently, the drains and canals have been re-contaminated.

The Ten-Mile Drain site consists of PCB-contaminated soil and sediment (mud) in and around a storm sewer system in St. Clair Shores. PCBs are also in canals where the storm sewer discharges and in Lake St. Clair. See Page 3 for an explanation of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and why the chemical compound is an environmental and health concern.

Work this summer

The current cleanup and investigation work at the site will continue during this transition. This summer, monthly sampling in the sewer drains will be done to monitor the effectiveness of the equipment put in this spring to trap the contaminated sediment. Ground water (underground water) will continue to be sampled twice a year. Stormwater at the outfall will also be sampled twice a year.

The long-term investigation and cleanup process

Because of the difficulties finding the source of the Ten-Mile Drain contamination, EPA is elevating this site to long-term status and bringing more resources to bear. The remedial branch of EPA Superfund will begin a comprehensive study called a remedial investigation or RI. This study will involve extensive sampling of area soil, sediment, ground water, surface water and air to identify how widespread the PCB contamination is and, most importantly, to identify the source(s) of the PCBs. The results of this study and all previous studies will be used to design the most effective approach to clean up the source of the pollution and any areas affected by the PCBs.

These cleanup options will be explained in detail in a document called a feasibility study or FS. In the FS, the cleanup options will be evaluated against criteria including effectiveness, overall protection and cost. EPA will then propose a cleanup plan for the site. The cleanup plan will be explained in a document called a proposed plan. The community will have an opportunity to comment on EPA's proposed cleanup plan as well as all of the options examined in the FS.

All of these documents will be made available to the public and the comment period will be announced in the local newspapers. EPA will evaluate comments received before selecting a final cleanup plan for the site.

This process can take several years to complete. However, if at any point in the process EPA finds that the site poses an immediate threat to the public or the environment the Agency can use its removal response authorities to take immediate action.

We want to hear from you!

With the transfer of the site to EPA's remedial branch, the Agency wants community input from the start.

Ways to get involved:

- Help EPA develop the site community involvement plan.
- Meet with EPA staff in person.
- Talk to EPA staff on the phone.
- Send us your comments.
- Post your comments on the EPA website.
- Help start a community advisory group.
- Help EPA find the source **of the PCB contamination**.

See inside this fact sheet to get more details about ways you can get involved and let your voice be heard.

Information repository

You may review site documents at:

St. Clair Shores Public Library
22500 Eleven Mile Road

Websites

www.epa.gov/region5/sites/tenmiledrain

www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts17.html

Get involved!

In order to better serve the St. Clair Shores community, EPA is asking for your input. There are many ways you can get involved:

Meet with EPA staff in person

EPA will be coming to St. Clair Shores the week of July 5 to meet one-on-one with area residents and officials to discuss their concerns about the ongoing investigation and cleanup.

EPA is in the process of developing a community involvement plan or CIP for the site. The purpose of the CIP is to provide EPA information about community concerns and enhance communication between residents and EPA. The CIP will be a living document that will evolve based on input from the community and as the investigation and cleanup process continues. Community involvement is crucial to the development of the plan.

We want to know your understanding of the contamination, the community's involvement with the canals and lake, general information about the area, and your concerns and insights regarding the contamination. By identifying the public's concerns, EPA is able to more effectively address the community's needs.

If you would be interested in meeting with EPA, please:

Call, fax, mail or e-mail Megan McSeveney. Her contact information is listed on the back page. Interviews can be done in person or over the phone.

All interviews are confidential.

Send or phone in your comments

If you cannot meet with EPA in person but would like to share information with us or let us know how you feel, you can:

- call Megan McSeveney at 800-621-8431, Ext. 61972.
- send your comments to Megan at the address listed on the back page of this fact sheet.
- visit the following EPA website to attach your comments:

  www.epa.gov/region5/sites/tenmiledrain

Mailing list

If you would like to be placed on the mailing list to receive information about the Ten-Mile Drain site or would like to set up a community interview, please contact Megan McSeveney.

Other community involvement programs

EPA offers a number of tools and resources for residents living near a Superfund site. Here is a list of programs the St. Clair Shores community may qualify for:

The most common is a **Technical Assistance Grant**, or TAG, which provides money for activities that help your community participate in decision-making at eligible Superfund sites. An initial grant up to $50,000 is available to qualified community groups so they can contract with independent technical advisers to interpret and help the community understand information about their site.

A Superfund **Community Advisory Group**, or CAG, is made up of members of the community and is designed for the exchange of information among the local community and EPA and other agencies involved in the cleanup of the Superfund site.

Technical Assistance Services for Communities or TASC provides educational and technical assistance to areas affected by hazardous waste sites handled by the Superfund program. This program provides non-EPA experts to explain hazardous waste issues at contaminated sites near your community and to interpret EPA's plans for cleaning up that waste. The technical experts available through TASC are environmental engineers and scientists from private companies and universities.

To enable communities to obtain the services of independent technical advisors to help community members understand site-related technical information and decisions, EPA has instituted a program called **Technical Assistance Plan** or TAP. This can be used at sites with cleanups where the TAP has been included in the settlement agreement between EPA and the responsible party. This primarily includes non-National Priority List (non-NPL) sites, but it's also possible for NPL sites. The assistance is available after a settlement agreement, which includes the TAP, has been signed by EPA and the potentially responsible party.

For more information on these community outreach programs, see the following website:

www.epa.gov/superfund/community

If you are interested in any of these programs, contact Megan McSeveney.

Timeline of past activities

Over the past nine years, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Environment, Macomb County Public Works Office (MCPWO), city of St. Clair Shores, Macomb County Heath Department, and EPA's removal response staff have done extensive cleanup, responded to residents' concerns and conducted investigations at the site including the following:

January/February 2002 - DNRE determined that elevated PCB concentrations were contained in sediment samples that were collected to dredge the Lange/Revere canals. Michigan notified the city and county of its findings. The county immediately conducted an investigation and determined the PCBs were discharging from the Ten-Mile Drain and the highest drain concentrations were in the vicinity of Harper Avenue and Bon Brae Street.

2002 - DNRE, county and city asked for EPA assistance to investigate the extent and degree of the contamination in the drain and canals.

March 2002 - Federal, state and local agencies held a public meeting to update the residents on the findings of the initial investigation.

March 2003 - EPA dredged the most contaminated sections of the canals and drain. More than 24,000 tons of material was removed.

January 2005 - MCPWO confirmed ongoing PCB contamination of the Ten-Mile Drain after reviewing a video of the drain, examining historic aerial photographs and reviewing comments from the public. State and local agencies asked for EPA's assistance again to clean out contaminated sediment from the drain and conduct investigations to determine the source of the PCBs.

Feb 2005 - MCPWO hosted a second public meeting to update residents.

May 2005- EPA and DNRE drilled 64 additional soil sampling locations in suspected source areas in an attempt to better understand the extent of contamination of PCBs.

2006 - Agencies placed a liner in a portion of sewer pipe to stop PCBs from getting into the pipe and ultimately into the canals and lake. EPA removed contaminated soil from nine residential yards or public easements.

2007 - DNRE provided $500,000 to the city for further investigation and cleanup efforts.

October 2008 - City of St. Clair Shores contractor ECT designed drain-cleaning system and began removing the most recent contaminated sediment from the drain.

Late 2009 - ECT discovered PCB-contaminated oil inside the lined portion of the sewer.

December 2009 - The city and EPA removed sediment and PCBs from the outfall of the drain where it enters the canal. The agencies also constructed "weirs" or small dams at 17 manhole locations in the sewer drains to isolate contaminated sediment and stop it from reaching the canal. Weirs are semi-circular metal barriers placed on the bottom half of the sewer pipes to stop the movement of PCBs that sink to the bottom but still allow water to flow through over the top of the weirs.

PCBs and potential health risks

PCBs are a group of chemicals originally used in industrial processes. PCBs have also been used in products such as sealants, rubber, paints, plastics, printing ink and insecticides. All PCBs are man-made; there are no known natural sources of PCBs in the environment. PCBs are either oily liquids or solids. They are colorless to light yellow and do not have a known smell or taste. PCBs do not readily dissolve in water or easily break down in the environment. In 1977 PCB production was banned in the United States.

PCBs can pose potential health risks through eating contaminated food, soil, or water; through direct contact; or through breathing PCB-contaminated air or particles. EPA considers PCBs as possibly cancer-causing chemicals. For more information on PCBs, see the following website: www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts17.html

National Priority Listing

This March the Ten-Mile Drain site was proposed for placement on the National Priorities List. The NPL is a roster of the nation's hazardous waste sites eligible for investigation and cleanup under EPA's Superfund program.

The Agency is currently reviewing comments received from the March 2010 proposal, and it hopes to make a final decision on whether to place the site on the NPL by this fall. The transfer of the site to EPA's remedial branch will allow for additional funding and resources, including enforcement. EPA's enforcement program follows leads to find those responsible for a hazardous waste site to either clean it up or reimburse EPA.

For more information

For more information about the Ten-Mile Drain site, please contact:

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Help us find the source

If you have any information that might help EPA locate the source of the PCB contamination, contact:

Megan McSeveney at 800-621-8431, Ext. 61972

All information will be kept confidential.

You do not have to give us your name.

TEN-MILE DRAIN SITE:
Additional Cleanup Work and Long-Term Study to Begin

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