

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region III
POLLUTION REPORT

Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2006

From: Jack Downie

Subject: Initiation of Action

Remacor, Inc.

P.O. Box 366, West Pittsburg, PA

Latitude: 40.9349711

Longitude: -80.3686583

POLREP No.:	2	Site #:	G3GM
Reporting Period:	09/15/06 - 09/27/06	D.O. #:	
Start Date:	9/15/2006	Response Authority:	CERCLA
Mob Date:	9/15/2006	Response Type:	Emergency
Demob Date:		NPL Status:	Non NPL
Completion Date:		Incident Category:	Removal Action
CERCLIS ID #:	PAD074965096	Contract #	
RCRIS ID #:			

Site Description

The Site is approximately 45 acres in size, consisting of four contiguous parcels of real estate, and contains manufacturing buildings, office buildings, and waste processing and storage areas. It is located on relatively flat terrain on the eastern shore of the Beaver River. The Site is bordered to the north by the Pannela Company Building and West Penn Power property, to the east by PA Route 168 and the community of West Pittsburg, to the south by field and surface water impoundments, and to the west by the Beaver River. The Taylor Township office is located on the east side of the Site and at the entrance to the Site. The locality is semi-rural.

Current Activities

September 15, 2006

OSC Downie met with Guardian Response Manager (ERRS) Jack Wilson. A walk through was conducted to familiarize the RM with the site. Twenty-four hour site security was implemented at this time. The OSC was interviewed by local news paper media.

September 20, 2006

OSC Downie and Guardian (ERRS) mobilized to the Remacor site. ERRS provided a Response Manager one crew foreman, one equipment operator, one truck driver, two clean-up techs, and one Field Cost Administrator (FCA). Guardian stationed their tool trailer and other equipment at the site.

September 21, 2006

Guardian conducted setup at the site and support area, unloaded and stored one-hundred, 55 gallon drums, began excavation to isolate and contain an approximate 12' by 12' oil-contaminated area at the SW area of the plant, and placed absorbent pads below a 37,000 pound transformer that was leaking oil. ERRS began installing "Super Silt" fencing at the SW corner of the facility to prevent contaminant migration, and measured areas around the perimeter of the facility where security fence needed to be extended. START mobilized to the site to provide the OSC with contractor oversight and documentation.

A public meeting in regards to the Remacor facility was held at the West Pittsburg Fire Hall. In attendance was OSC Jack Downie, OSC Marjorie Easton, and US EPA community coordinator Larry Johnson. In addition, PADEP personnel Danial Holler and Jim Russka, START, and Remacore CEO, Mr. Jackman were in attendance. Statements regarding key issues of the Remacor facility were addressed to several Lawrence County citizens, local officials and media by US EPA and PADEP representatives. A question and answer session was then open to the public. OSC Downie was interviewed by local TV media at the conclusion of the meeting.

September 22, 2006

ERRS erected a Super Silt Fence at the SW corner of the plant, completed the excavation of the oil contaminated area at the SW corner of the plant, and purchased chain link fencing material from a local vendor. Guardian excavated a trench at the SW corner of the plant, in a fill area, where START measured above background radiation levels. Trenches were also dug at other potentially contaminated areas around the facility. START gathered manufacturers information from two large, non-active electrical transformers.

September 23, 2006

ERRS began driving posts and concreting them in for the eight foot security fence to be added around the parameter of facility property.

September 25, 2006

ERRS (Guardian) continued to erect the security fence that is an extension of the existing security fence already at the facility. They grinded the tops of the four inch galvanized posts and installed caps that holds the top railing in place.

OSC Downie met with PADEP representative Gary Woziak on site. Downie, Woziak, Plant Manager Jack Lingenfelter and START conducted a walk through of the facility. Lingenfelter described the different processes of the facility, pointing out safety concerns, and addressing questions and concerns brought up by the OSC and PADEP. START assisted the OSC with oversight and documentation.

September 26, 2006

ERRS continued with the erection of the security fence. They installed the top railing onto the caps, and began attaching the chain link sections to the posts and top railing.

OSC Downie and START randomly screened drums in the burn area with a Raytec Raynger ST non-contact thermometer for elevated drum temperatures, indicating reactivity within the drums. No elevated temperatures were discovered. START conducted a screening of the large waste pile that is emitting elevated levels of radiation. START marked the various areas of the pile with flags where elevated levels were found to be most prevalent. A Clor-n-Soil test was conducted by START on the contaminated soil beneath the large 3700 pound transformer that has been disconnected from the power station. The test indicated that the oil from the transformer contains less than 50 ppm of PCBs. Forty-Two industrial size capacitors were discovered in a room of the building that is connected to the Remacor main offices. The capacitors were non functional, lying on the concrete floor in the room. The labels could still be read on a select number of capacitors. Of these, they all indicated that they contained No PCBs. There was thin layer of oil saturated dirt lying on the concrete floor beneath the capacitors. A Clor-n-Soil test was performed and indicated the dirt contained less than 50 ppm of PCBs. The plant manager indicated that the process using these capacitors was built in 1982. This is also an indication that the capacitors are non PCB.

OSC Matlock met with OSC Downie on site. Downie and Matlock conducted a walk through of the facility. Remacor CEO Joe Jackman met with OSCs Downie and Matlock on site. He indicated that he and a potential investor wanted to put together an acceptable plan for Remacor to immediately begin removal of fire debris, residual waste and the low level radioactive material. This equates to approximately fifteen-hundred to sixteen-hundred ton of waste. US EPA and PADEP will review any plans in regards to this proposal.

OSC Downie and START walked the area of the property adjacent to the Beaver River to visibly check access to the facility from that direction. The terrain is quite steep and difficult to climb from the river to gain access to plant facilities. There appears to be no practical means to completely barricade the facility property from the river area. The steep bank area that already exists is a natural deterrent. START assisted the OSC with oversight and documentation.

September 27, 2006

ERRS completed the erection of the security fence placed around the parameter of the facility.

START assisted the OSC with oversight and documentation.

Next Steps

Cover and/or containerize thorium and/or other low-level radioactive materials, delineated in soils and residues.

Control and stabilize pyrophoric and water reactive metals that are exposed to the weather where necessary. This may require repackaging or relocation to indoor storage areas. Make temporary repairs to structures to keep out rain water when necessary.

Conduct an extent of contamination study.

Arrange for a command post/office set up with phones, fax and other communication equipment.

Maintain close coordination with State officials and municipal authorities including local fire officials.

Key Issues

Actual or potential exposure to nearby human populations, animals or the food chain from hazardous substances of pollutants or contaminants:

The Taylor Township Municipal Buildings are located at the entrance to the Site. The community of West Pittsburg is located directly east in the immediate downwind footprint of the Site. Access to the Site is not secure because of multiple openings in the fence around the 40-acre Site. A significant volume of ignitable, pyrophoric magnesium is unsecured on Site and low level radioactive materials are present. The high risk of fire, combined with the presence of low level radioactive materials, presents a serious fire-fighting risk and inhalation hazard to first responders and the nearby population of West Pittsburg.

Actual or potential contamination of drinking water supplies or sensitive ecosystems:

The Site is located on the left descending shoreline of the Beaver River. An inspection performed by PADEP and EPA revealed that the surface water runoff from the Site contains visible contamination and enters storm drains. A major fire would result in the use of large volumes of water to protect adjacent structures from an intense pyrophoric metal fire that would increase runoff and potential contamination of the Beaver River from process wastes and low level radioactive materials.

Hazardous substances or pollutants or contaminants in drums, barrels, tanks, or other bulk storage containers, that may pose a threat of release:

Much of the magnesium hazardous material on Site, an estimated 3,000,000 pounds, is stored in drums and in supersacks. The hazardous materials are stored in buildings that have leaky roofs or are without doors, or stored outdoors. Inspection by EPA and State officials noted the potential ease for which water could or has reached the hazardous material stock.

Weather conditions may cause hazardous substances or pollutants or contaminants to migrate or release:

Ignitable magnesium turnings, shavings and fines are stored in areas exposed to the weather. Chemical reactions have caused a major fire and release of smoke and potentially dangerous particulate matter. Low level radioactive materials were detected in a waste pile on the property, exposed to the elements. Surface water was observed to be transporting Site contaminants. The materials and wastes on Site will, upon entrainment or dissolving into surface water, harmfully affect water quality.

Threat of fire or explosion:

In August 2005, a chemical reaction caused a fire that consumed an onsite building 450 feet in length. There are reports of drums containing magnesium fines that have erupted more than once. The potential for explosion exists because during a fire, explosive hydrogen gas can be generated. Pyrophoric metal fires can be very difficult and dangerous to extinguish.

The availability of other appropriate Federal or State response mechanisms to respond to the release:

The PADEP requested EPA assistance to stabilize and secure the Site. The State does not have the resources available to conduct an emergency stabilization of the Site.