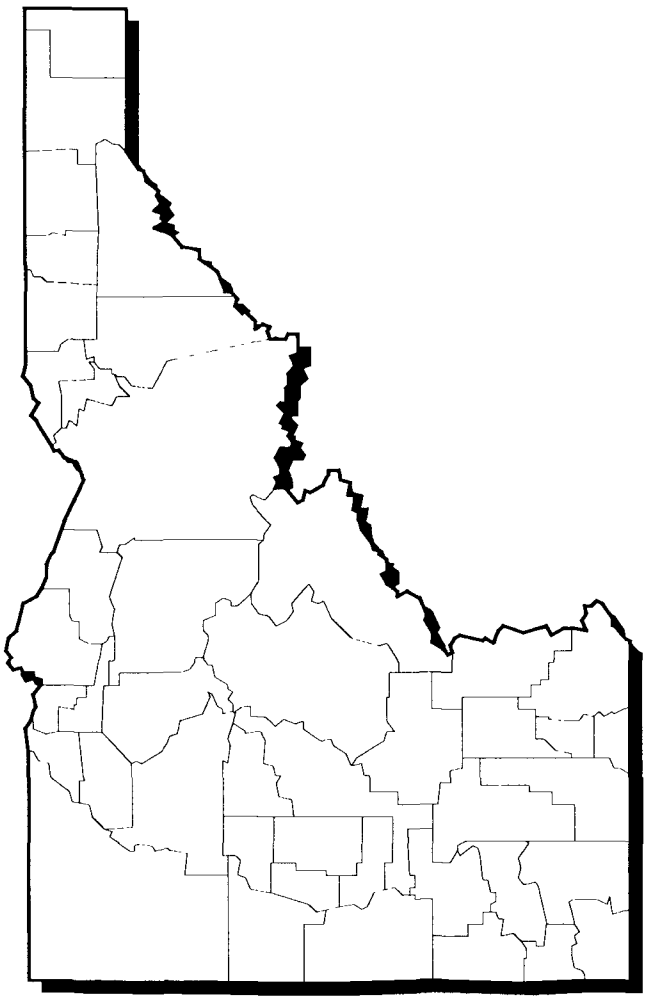
United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Solid Waste And
Emergency Response
(5102 G)

EPA/540/R-93/011
December 1992
PB93-963212

# SUPERFUND: Progress at National Priority List Sites



# IDAHO 1992 UPDATE

Printed on Recycled Paper

Publication #9200.5-713B
December 1992

# NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST SITES:

## Idaho

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Office of Emergency & Remedial Response
Office of Program Management
Washington, DC 20460

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 5, Library (PL-12J)
77 West Jackson Boulevard, 12th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604-3590

If you wish to purchase copies of any additional State volumes, contact:

National Technical Information Service (NTIS)
U.S. Department of Commerce
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22161
(703) 486-4650

The complete set of the 49 State reports may be ordered as PB93-963250.

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# INTRODUCTION

## A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF SUPERFUND

During the second half of the Twentieth Century, the environmental consequences of more than 100 years of industrialization in the United States became increasingly clear. Authors such as Rachel Carson wrote passionately about the often-hidden environmental effects of our modern society's widespread use of chemicals and other hazardous materials. Their audience was small at first, but gradually their message spread. Growing concern turned to action, as people learned more about the environment and began to act on their knowledge

The 1970s saw environmental issues burst onto the national scene and take hold in the national consciousness. The first Earth Day was observed in 1970, the year that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was founded. By the end of the 1970s, Love Canal in New York and the Valley of the Drums in Kentucky had entered the popular lexicon as synonyms for pollution and environmental degradation.

### Superfund Is Established

The industrialization that gave Americans the world's highest standard of living also created problems that only a national program could address. By 1980, the U.S. Congress had passed numerous environmental laws, implemented by the EPA, but many serious hazardous waste problems were slipping through the cracks.

Responding to growing concern about public health and environmental threats from uncontrolled releases of hazardous materials, the U.S. Congress passed the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). Popularly known as Superfund, CERCLA had one seemingly simple job—to uncover and clean up hazardous materials spills and contaminated sites.

### A Big Job

Few in Congress, the EPA, the environmental community, or the general public knew in 1980 just how big the nation's hazardous materials problem is. Almost everyone thought that Superfund would be a short-lived program requiring relatively few resources to clean up at most a few hundred sites. They were quite mistaken.

As the EPA set to work finding sites and gauging their potential to harm people and the environment, the number of sites grew. Each discovery seemed to lead to another, and today almost 36,000 hazardous waste sites have been investigated as potential hazardous waste sites. They are catalogued in the EPA's computerized database, CERCLIS (for the Comprehensive Environmental Re-

sponse, Compensation, and Liability Information System).

The damage to public health and the environment that each site in CERCLIS might cause is evaluated; many sites have been referred to State and local governments for cleanup. The EPA lists the nation's most serious hazardous waste sites on the National Priorities List, or NPL. (These Superfund sites are eligible for federally-funded cleanup, but whenever possible the EPA makes polluters pay for the contamination they helped create.) The NPL now numbers 1,275 sites, with 50 to 100 added each year. By the end of the century, the NPL may reach as many as 2,100 sites.

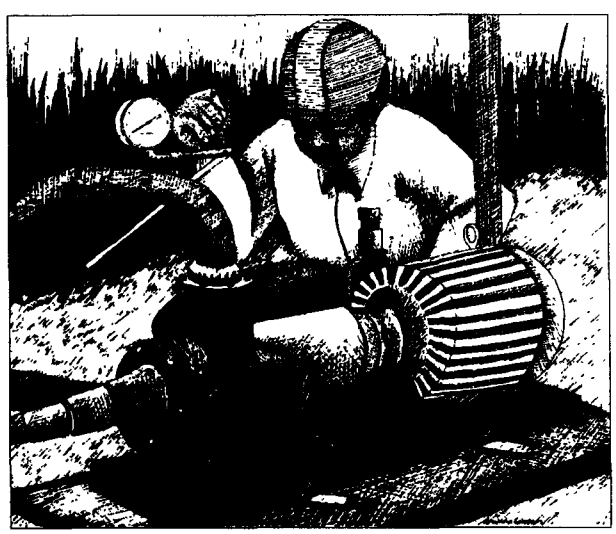
Superfund faces some of the most complex pollution problems ever encountered by an environmental program. Improperly stored or disposed chemicals and the soil they contaminate are one concern. More difficult to correct are the wetlands and bays, and the groundwater, lakes, and rivers often used for drinking water that are contaminated by chemicals spreading through the soil or mixing with storm water runoff. Toxic vapors contaminate the air at some sites, threatening the health of people living and working near by.

Superfund aims to control immediate public health and environmental threats by tackling the worst problems at the worst sites first. Wherever possible, Superfund officials use innovative treatment techniques—many developed or refined by the EPA—to correct hazardous materials problems once and for all. Many of the treatment techniques they use did not exist when the program was created.

The EPA Administrator had challenged Superfund to complete construction necessary for cleanup work at 130 NPL sites by the end of the 1992 federal fiscal year. By September 30, 1992, the end of fiscal year 1992, construction had been completed at a total of 149 NPL sites. Superfund is well on its way of meeting the Administrator's goal of completing construction at 200 NPL sites by the end of fiscal year 1993, and 650 sites by the end of fiscal year 2000.

## Quick Cleanup at Non-NPL Sites

Long-standing hazardous waste sites are not Superfund's only concern. The EPA also responds to hazardous spills and other emergencies, hauling away chemicals for proper treatment or disposal. Superfund teams perform or supervise responses at rail and motor vehicle accidents, fires, and other emergencies involving hazardous substances. They also evacuate people living and working near by, if necessary, and provide clean drinking water to people whose own water is contaminated. Removal crews also post warning signs and take other precautions to keep people and animals away from hazardous substances.



*Superfund employee prepares equipment for groundwater treatment.*

Quick Cleanups, or Removals, are not limited to emergencies. When cleanup crews at contaminated sites find hazardous substances that immediately threaten people or the environment, they act right away to reduce the threat or to remove the chemicals outright. As the EPA implements the Superfund Accelerated Cleanup Model (SACM), more and more sites will undergo quick cleanups, and many of these will be cleaned up completely without ever being included on the NPL. (See "Streamlining Superfund: The Superfund Accelerated Cleanup Model.")

Some of Superfund's most significant gains in public health and environmental protection have been won by the removal program. As of March 31, 1992, the Emergency Response Program had logged more than 2,300 removal completions since Superfund was established.

*Superfund employee removing drums from a Superfund site.*

## The Public's Role

Superfund is unique among federal programs in its commitment to citizen participation. Although the EPA is responsible for determining how dangerous a site is and how best to clean it up, the Agency relies on citizen input as it makes these decisions.

Community residents are often invaluable sources of information about a hazardous waste site, its current and previous owners, and the activities that took place there. Such information can be crucial to experts evaluating a site and its potential dangers.

Residents also comment on EPA cleanup plans by stating their concerns and preferences at public meetings and other forums and in formal, written comments to Agency proposals. The EPA takes these comments and concerns seriously, and has modified many proposals in response to local concerns. For, ultimately, it is the community and its citizens that will live with the results of the EPA's decisions and actions; it is only fair that citizens participate in the process.

## A Commitment to Communication

The Superfund program is very serious about public outreach and communication. Community relations coordinators are assigned to each NPL site to help the public understand the potential hazards present, as well as the cleanup alternatives. Local information repositories, such as libraries or other public buildings, have been established near each NPL site to ensure that the public has an opportunity to review all relevant information and the proposed cleanup plans.

The individual State volumes contain summary fact sheets on NPL sites in each State and territory. Together, the fact sheets provide a concise report on site conditions and the progress made toward site cleanups as of March 1992. The EPA revises these volumes periodically to provide an up-to-date record of program activities. A glossary of key terms relating to hazardous waste management and Superfund site cleanup is provided at the back of this book.

# INTRODUCTION

Superfund is, of course, a public program, and as such it belongs to everyone of us. This volume, along with other State volumes, comprises the EPA's report on Superfund progress to the program's owners for the year 1992.

# STREAMLINING SUPERFUND: THE SUPERFUND ACCELERATED CLEANUP MODEL

Historically, critics and supporters alike have measured Superfund's progress by the number of hazardous waste sites deleted from the NPL. Although easy enough to tally, this approach is too narrow. It misses the major gains Superfund makes by reducing major risks at the nation's worst hazardous sites long before all clean-up work is done and the site deleted. It also ignores the Removal Program's contributions to meeting Superfund's twin mandates of maximizing public health and environmental protection.

Renewing Superfund's commitment to rapid protection from hazardous materials, the EPA is streamlining the program. The Superfund Accelerated Cleanup Model, or SACM, will take Early Actions, such as removing hazardous wastes or contaminated materials, while experts study the site. SACM also will combine similar site studies to reduce the time required to evaluate a site and its threats to people and the environment. This way, immediate public health and environmental threats will be addressed while long-term cleanups are being planned.

Emergencies such as train derailments and motor vehicle accidents will continue to be handled expeditiously. Teams of highly trained technicians will swing into action right away, coordinating the cleanup and removal of hazardous substances to ensure public safety as quickly as possible.

## Breaking With Tradition

The traditional Superfund process begins with a lengthy phase of study and site assessment, but SACM will save time by combining separate, yet similar, activities. Each EPA Region will form a Decision Team of site managers, risk assessors, community relations coordinators, lawyers, and other experts to monitor the studies and quickly determine whether a site requires Early Action (taking less than five years), Long-term Action, or both.

While the site studies continue, the Decision Team will begin the short-term work required to correct immediate public health or environmental threats from the site. Besides removing hazardous materials, Early Actions include taking precautions to keep contaminants from moving off the site and restricting access to the site. Early Actions could eliminate most human risk from these sites, and Superfund will further focus its public participation and public information activities on site assessment and Early Action.

## Long-Term Solutions

While Early Actions can correct many hazardous waste problems—and provide the bulk of public health and environmental protection—some contamination will take longer to correct. Cleanups of mining sites, wetlands, estuaries, and projects involving incineration of contaminants or restoration of groundwater can take far longer than the three to five years envisioned for Early Actions. Under SACM, these sites will be handled much as they are now.

Also under SACM, the EPA will continue its pursuit of potentially responsible parties who may have caused or contributed to site contamination. Expedited enforcement and procedures for negotiating potentially responsible party settlements will secure their participation. Superfund personnel will continue to oversee clean-up work performed by potentially responsible parties.

# HOW SUPERFUND WORKS

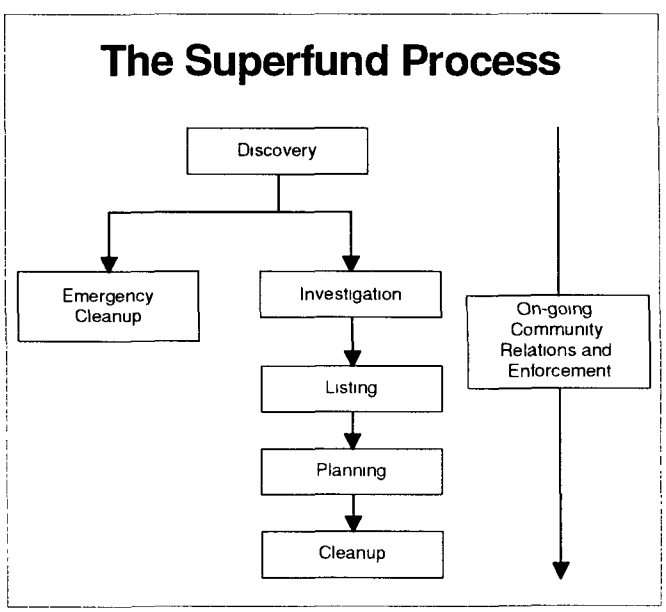
Each Superfund site presents a different set of complex problems. The same hazardous materials and chemicals often contaminate many sites, but the details of each site are different. Almost always, soil is contaminated with one or more chemicals. Their vapors may taint the air over and around the site. Contaminants may travel through the soil and reach underground aquifers which may be used for drinking water, or they may spread over the site to contaminate streams, ponds, and wetlands. The contaminating chemicals may interact with each other, presenting even more complicated cleanup problems.

Superfund's cleanup process is arduous and exacting. It requires the best efforts of hundreds of experts in science and engineering, public health, administration and management, law, and many other fields.

The average NPL site takes from seven to ten years to work its way through the system, from discovery to the start of long-term cleanup. Actual cleanup work can take years, decades if contaminated groundwater must be treated. Of course, imminent threats to public health or the environment are corrected right away.

The diagram to the right presents a simplified view of the cleanup process. The major steps in the Superfund process are:

- Site discovery and investigation to identify contaminants and determine whether emergency action is required;
- Emergency site work such as removing contaminants for proper treatment or disposal, and securing the site to keep people and animals away, if warranted by conditions at the site;
- Site evaluation to determine how people living and working nearby, and the environment, may be exposed to site contaminants;
- Detailed studies to determine whether conditions are serious enough to add the site to the National Priorities List of sites eligible for federally funded cleanup under Superfund;
- Selection, design, and implementation of a cleanup plan, after a thorough review of the most effective cleanup options, given site conditions, contaminants present, and their potential threat to public health or the environment.
- Follow-up to ensure that the cleanup work done at the site continues to be effective over the long term.




From the earliest stages, EPA investigators work hard to identify those responsible for the contamination. As their responsibility is established, the EPA negotiates with these "responsible parties" to pay for cleaning up the problem they helped create. This "enforcement first" policy saves Superfund Trust Fund monies for use in cleanups where the responsible parties cannot be identified, or where they are unable to fund cleanup work.

# THE VOLUME

## How to Use the State Book

The site fact sheets presented in this book are comprehensive summaries that cover a broad range of information. The fact sheets describe hazardous waste sites on the NPL and their locations, as well as the conditions leading to their listing ("Site Description"). The summaries list the types of contaminants that have been discovered and related threats to public and ecological health ("Threats and Contaminants"). "Cleanup Approach" presents an overview of the cleanup activities completed, underway, or planned. The fact sheets conclude with a brief synopsis of how much progress has been made in protecting public health and the environment. The summaries also pinpoint other actions, such as legal efforts to involve polluters responsible for site contamination and community concerns.

The fact sheets are arranged in alphabetical order by site name. Because site cleanup is a dynamic and gradual process, all site information is accurate as of the date shown on the bottom of each page. Progress always is being made at NPL sites, and the EPA periodically will update the site fact sheets to reflect recent actions and will publish updated State volumes. The following two pages show a generic fact sheet and briefly describe the information under each section.

## How Can You Use This State Book?

You can use this book to keep informed about the sites that concern you, particularly ones close to home. The EPA is committed to involving the public in the decision making process associated with hazardous waste cleanup. The Agency solicits input from area residents in communities affected by Superfund sites. Citizens are likely to be affected not only by hazardous site conditions, but also by the remedies that combat them. Site cleanups take many forms and can affect communities in different ways. Local traffic may be rerouted, residents may be relocated, temporary water supplies may be necessary.

Definitive information on a site can help citizens sift through alternatives and make decisions. To make good choices, you must know what the threats are and how the EPA intends to clean up the site. You must understand the cleanup alternatives being proposed for site cleanup and how residents may be affected by each one. You also need to have some idea of how your community intends to use the site in the future, and you need to know what the community can realistically expect once the cleanup is complete.

The EPA wants to develop cleanup methods that meet community needs, but the Agency only can take local concerns into account if it understands what they are. Information must travel both ways in order for cleanups to be effective and satisfactory. Please take this opportunity to learn more, become involved, and assure that hazardous waste cleanup at "your" site considers your community's concerns.

# THE VOLUME

**NPL LISTING HISTORY**

Provides the dates when the site was Proposed, made Final, and Deleted from the NPL.

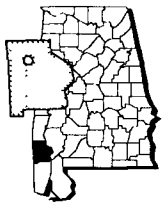
**SITE RESPONSIBILITY**

Identifies the Federal, State, and/or potentially responsible parties taking responsibility for cleanup actions at the site.

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS**

Summarizes the actions to reduce the threats to nearby residents and the surrounding environment and the progress towards cleaning up the site.

**SITE NAME**
**STATE**
EPA ID# ABC0000000



**EPA REGION XX**
COUNTY NAME
LOCATION

**Other Names:**

**Site Description** — A

**Site Responsibility:**

**NPL Listing History**
Proposed XX/XX/XX
Final XX/XX/XX

**Threats and Contaminants** — B

**Cleanup Approach** — C

**Response Action Status** — D

**Site Facts:** — E

**Environmental Progress**

**Site Repository**

**SITE REPOSITORY**

Lists the location of the primary site repository. The site repository may include community relations plans, public meeting announcements and minutes, fact sheets, press releases, and other site-related documents.

A

### SITE DESCRIPTION

This section describes the location and history of the site. It includes descriptions of the most recent activities and past actions at the site that have contributed to the contamination. Population estimates, land usages, and nearby resources give readers background on the local setting surrounding the site.

B

### THREATS AND CONTAMINANTS

The major chemical categories of site contamination are noted, as well as which environmental resources are affected. Icons representing each of the affected resources (may include air, groundwater, surface water, soil, and contamination to environmentally sensitive areas) are included in the margins of this section. Potential threats to residents and the surrounding environments arising from the site contamination also are described.

C

### CLEANUP APPROACH

This section contains a brief overview of how the site is being cleaned up.

D

### RESPONSE ACTION STATUS

Specific actions that have been accomplished or will be undertaken to clean up the site are described here. Cleanup activities at NPL sites are divided into separate phases, depending on the complexity and required actions at the site. Two major types of cleanup activities often are described: initial, immediate, or emergency actions to quickly remove or reduce imminent threats to the community and surrounding areas; and long-term remedial phases directed at final cleanup at the site. Each stage of the cleanup strategy is presented in this section of the summary. Icons representing the stage of the cleanup process (initial actions, site investigations, EPA selection of the cleanup remedy, engineering design phase, cleanup activities underway, and completed cleanup) are located in the margin next to each activity description.

E

### SITE FACTS

Additional information on activities and events at the site are included in this section. Often details on legal or administrative actions taken by the EPA to achieve site cleanup or other facts pertaining to community involvement with the site cleanup process are reported here.

## THE VOLUME

The "icons," or symbols, accompanying the text allow the reader to see at a glance which environmental resources are affected and the status of cleanup activities at the site.

### Icons in the Threats and Contaminants Section

Contaminated *Groundwater* resources in the vicinity or underlying the site. (Groundwater is often used as a drinking water source.)

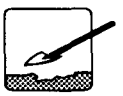
Contaminated *Surface Water and Sediments* on or near the site. (These include lakes, ponds, streams, and rivers.)

Contaminated *Air* in the vicinity of the site. (Air pollution usually is periodic and involves contaminated dust particles or hazardous gas emissions.)

Contaminated *Soil and Sludges* on or near the site. (This contamination category may include bulk or other surface hazardous wastes found on the site.)

Threatened or contaminated *Environmentally Sensitive Areas* in the vicinity of the site. (Examples include wetlands and coastal areas or critical habitats.)

### Icons in the Response Action Status Section



*Initial, Immediate, or Emergency Actions* have been taken or are underway to eliminate immediate threats at the site.

*Site Studies* at the site to determine the nature and extent of contamination are planned or underway.

*Remedy Selected* indicates that site investigations have been concluded, and the EPA has selected a final cleanup remedy for the site or part of the site.

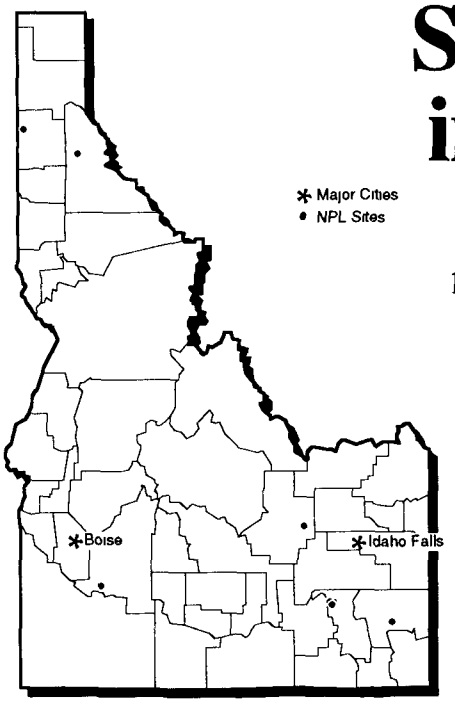
*Remedy Design* means that engineers are preparing specifications and drawings for the selected cleanup technologies.

*Cleanup Ongoing* indicates that the selected cleanup remedies for the contaminated site, or part of the site, currently are underway.

*Cleanup Complete* shows that all cleanup goals have been achieved for the contaminated site or part of the site.

# A SUMMARY OF THE STATE PROGRAM

# Superfund Activities in Idaho

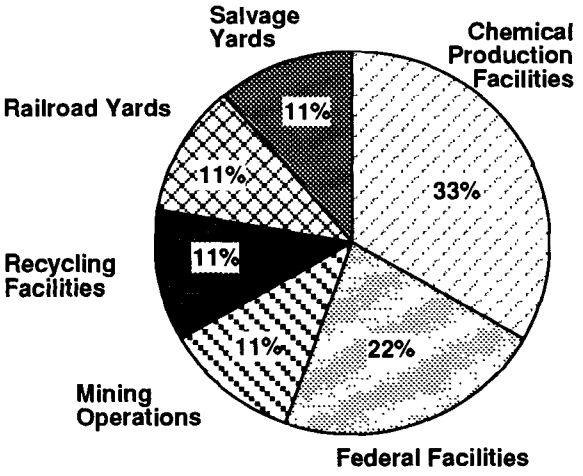



The State of Idaho is located within EPA Region 10, which includes three northwestern States and Alaska. The State covers 82,412 square miles. According to the 1990 Census, Idaho experienced a 7 percent increase in population between 1980 and 1990, and is ranked forty-second in U.S. population with approximately 1,007,000 residents.

Although Idaho has no State Superfund law, the Idaho Hazardous Waste Management Act of 1983, most recently amended in 1988, establishes two funds and provides minimal legal authority for site cleanups. Since this statute has virtually no enforcement authorities, the State is authorized under the Idaho Environmental Protection and Health Act to compel polluters to conduct or pay for cleanup activities in emergency situations. In practice, the State prefers polluters to pay for site cleanup since the accounts established under the Act are primarily a hazardous waste management fund, not a cleanup fund. The Hazardous Waste Training, Emergency, and Monitoring Account may be used for needed removal and long-term cleanup actions, while the Hazardous Waste Emergency Account may be used only for emergency responses. Currently, 9 sites in the State of Idaho have been listed as final on the NPL. No new sites have been proposed for listing in 1992.

**The Department of Health and Welfare**
implements the Superfund Program in the State of Idaho

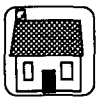
### Activities responsible for hazardous waste contamination in the State of Idaho include:




### Facts about the nine NPL sites in Idaho:

Immediate Actions (such as removing hazardous substances or restricting site access) were performed at three sites.

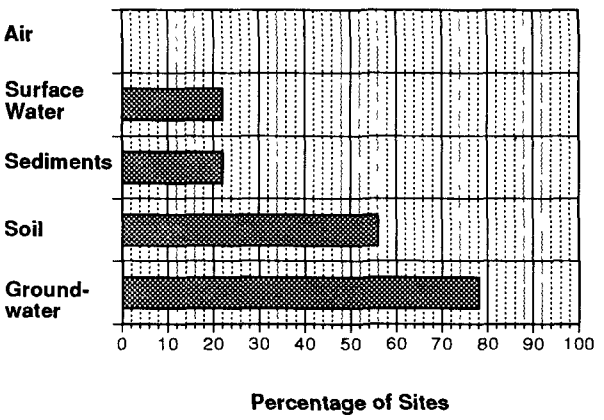
No sites endanger sensitive environments.



Eight sites are located near residential areas.

# Most Sites Have Multiple Contaminants and Contaminated Media:

*Media Contaminated at Sites*




*Contaminants Found at Sites*

| | Percentage of Sites |
|---|---|
| Heavy Metals | 100% |
| VOCs | 44% |
| PCBs | 22% |
| Pesticides/Herbicides | 11% |
| Petrochemicals/Explosions | 11% |
| Asbestos | 11% |
| Other* | 11% |

*Other contaminants include selenium and fluoride.

## The Potentially Responsible Party Pays...

In the State of Idaho, potentially responsible parties are paying for or conducting cleanup activities at six sites.

## For Further Information on NPL Sites and Hazardous Waste Programs in the State of Idaho Please Contact:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☎ EPA Region 10 Superfund Community Relations | For information concerning community involvement | (206) 553-6901 |
| ☎ National Response Center | To report a hazardous waste emergency | (800) 424-8802 |
| ☎ Department of Health and Welfare: Division of Environmental Quality, Planning and Evaluation | For information about the State's responsibility in the Superfund Program | (208) 334-5879 |
| ☎ EPA Region 10 Superfund Branch | For information about the Regional Superfund Program Federal Superfund Program | (206) 553-1987 |
| ☎ EPA Superfund Hotline | For information about the Federal Superfund Program | (800) 424-9068 |

# THE NPL REPORT

## PROGRESS TO DATE

The following Progress Report lists all sites currently on, or deleted from, the NPL and briefly summarizes the status of activities for each site at the time this report was prepared. The steps in the Superfund cleanup process are arrayed across the top of the chart, and each site's progress through these steps is represented by an arrow (⇨) indicating the current stage of cleanup.

Large and complex sites often are organized into several cleanup stages. For example, separate cleanup efforts may be required to address the source of the contamination, hazardous substances in the groundwater, and surface water pollution, or to clean up different areas of a large site. In such cases, the chart portrays cleanup progress at the site's *most advanced* stage, reflecting the status of site activities rather than administrative accomplishments.

⇨ An arrow in the "Initial Response" category indicates that an emergency cleanup, immediate action, or initial action has been completed or currently is underway. Emergency or initial actions are taken as an interim measure to provide immediate relief from exposure to hazardous site conditions or to stabilize a site to prevent further contamination.

⇨ A final arrow in the "Site Studies" category indicates that an investigation to determine the nature and extent of the contamination at the site currently is ongoing or planned.

⇨ A final arrow in the "Remedy Selection" category means that the EPA has selected the final cleanup strategy for the site. At the few sites where the EPA has determined that initial response actions have eliminated site contamination, or that any remaining contamination will be naturally dispersed without further cleanup activities, a "No Action" remedy has been selected. In these cases, the arrows are discontinued at the "Remedy Selection" step and resume in the "Construction Complete" category.

⇨ A final arrow at the "Remedial Design" stage indicates that engineers currently are designing the technical specifications for the selected cleanup remedies and technologies.

⇨ A final arrow in the "Cleanup Ongoing" column means that final cleanup actions have been started at the site and currently are underway.

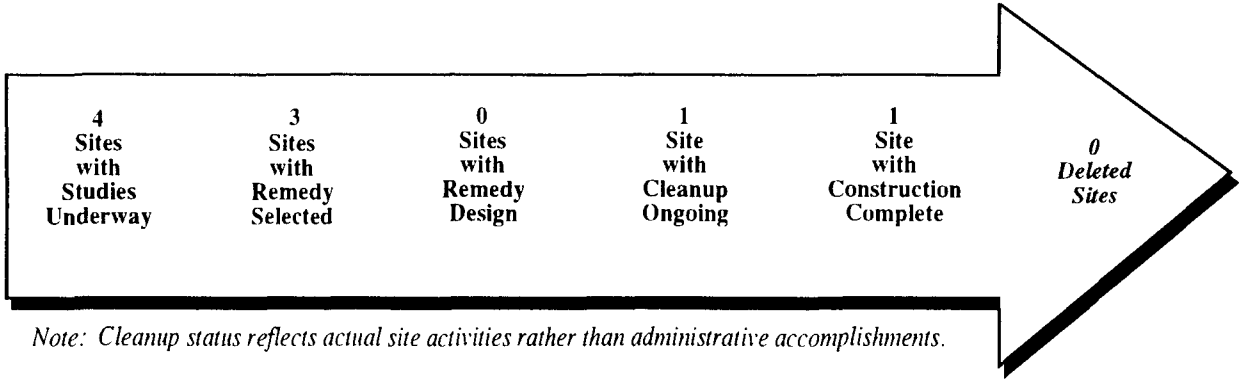
⇨ A final arrow in the "Construction Complete" category is used only when all phases of the site cleanup plan have been performed, and the EPA has determined that no additional construction actions are required at the site. Some sites in this category currently may be undergoing long-term operation and maintenance or monitoring to ensure that the cleanup actions continue to protect human health and the environment.

✓ A check in the "Deleted" category indicates that the site cleanup has met all human health and environmental goals and that the EPA has deleted the site from the NPL.

Further information on the activities and progress at each site is given in the site "Fact Sheets" published in this volume.

# Progress Toward Cleanup at NPL Sites in the State of Idaho

| Site Name | County | NPL | Date | Initial Response | Site Studies | Remedy Selected | Remedy Design | Cleanup Ongoing | Construction Complete | Deleted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ARRCOM (DREXLER ENTERPRISES) | KOOTENAI | Final | 09/08/83 | ⇨ | ⇨ | ⇨ | | | ⇨ | |
| BUNKER HILL MINING & METALLURGICAL | SHOSHONE | Final | 09/08/83 | ⇨ | ⇨ | ⇨ | | | | |
| EASTERN MICHAUD FLATS CONTAMINATION | POWER/ BANNOCK | Final | 08/30/90 | | ⇨ | | | | | |
| IDAHO NATIONAL ENGINEERING LAB (US DOE) | BUTTE | Final | 11/21/89 | | ⇨ | ⇨ | | | | |
| KERR-MCGEE CHEMICAL CORP. | CARIBOU | Final | 10/04/89 | | ⇨ | | | | | |
| MONSANTO CHEMICAL COMPANY (SODA SPRINGS PLANT) | CARIBOU | Fianl | 08/30/90 | | ⇨ | | | | | |
| MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE | ELMORE | Final | 08/30/90 | | ⇨ | | | | | |
| PACIFIC HIDE & FUR RECYCLING CO. | BANNOCK | Final | 09/21/84 | ⇨ | ⇨ | ⇨ | ⇨ | ⇨ | | |
| UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD CO. | BANNOCK | Final | 09/21/84 | | ⇨ | ⇨ | | | | |

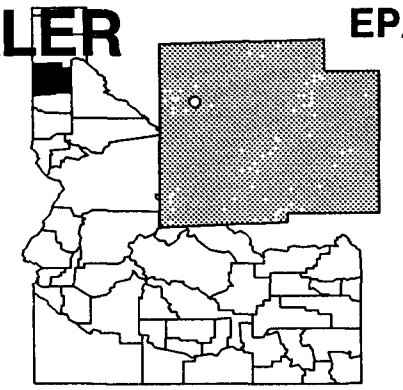



*Note: Cleanup status reflects actual site activities rather than administrative accomplishments.*

# ARRCOM (DREXLER ENTERPRISES)

## IDAHO

EPA ID# IDD000800961



**EPA REGION 10**

Kootenai County
Rathdrum

## Site Description

The ARRCOM (Drexler Enterprises) site covers a little over an acre, approximately 3 miles southwest of Rathdrum. From 1960 until the facility was abandoned in 1982, ARRCOM recycled waste oils containing a variety of organic solvents, lead, and polychorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Activities at the site, such as abandoning storage tanks and trucks at the site and producing hazardous waste materials, have resulted in the contamination of soils and sludges. Approximately 6,300 people live within 3 miles of the site. The residents in the area depend on groundwater for drinking water as well as for the irrigation of fields. The nearest well is 150 feet away from the site. The Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer runs approximately 135 feet underneath the site and is the sole source of drinking water and crop irrigation for 350,000 people in the region. Three groundwater monitoring wells surround the site.

**Site Responsibility:** This site is being addressed through Federal actions.

**NPL LISTING HISTORY**
Proposed Date: 12/30/82
Final Date: 09/08/83

## Threats and Contaminants

Soils on the site contained volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including toluene, xylene, and methyl ethyl ketone; heavy metals including lead and mercury; acid; PCBs; and pentachlorophenol (PCP). Buildings on the site were constructed using asbestos materials; however, these buildings have been removed. Accidental ingestion or inhalation of contaminated soil particles or asbestos posed a potential health risk prior to cleanup. No contamination has been found in the groundwater.

## Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed through immediate actions; further investigations showed that no further cleanup actions are required.

### Response Action Status

**Immediate Actions:** In 1983, the EPA began removing and treating contaminants at the site. Tanks containing PCB-contaminated products were pumped and flushed. The volume of contents in the remaining tanks was approximately 32,000 gallons. Approximately 10,700 gallons of oil and water mixture were recycled, 1,140 pounds of PCB flushings were incinerated off site, and 134 cubic yards of contaminated soil were disposed of in an approved landfill. In 1987, the EPA removed and segregated all the hazards. A containment tent was constructed for asbestos removal in the boiler room. A mobile laboratory was set up, and monitoring and instrument surveying were conducted throughout the site. Samples were taken of soil and asbestos. The tanks and trucks were cleaned, disassembled, and disposed of. Approximately 2,000 cubic yards of contaminated soils were removed. All buildings and vehicles have been removed. In 1990, the EPA removed approximately 1,500 cubic yards of soil contaminated with lead and PCBs. Post-removal soil sampling was conducted, and the site was backfilled with clean fill and was regraded.

**Entire Site:** In 1991, the EPA studied the site to ensure that all site risks had been addressed by the initial cleanup actions. An evaluation of the soil was performed in 1991. Additional soil and groundwater samples were taken in late 1991 and early 1992. In mid-1992, the EPA determined that no further actions were required at the site. Following the investigation, the EPA issued a report to the public stating the intent to delete the site from the NPL. The site is expected to be deleted in late 1992.

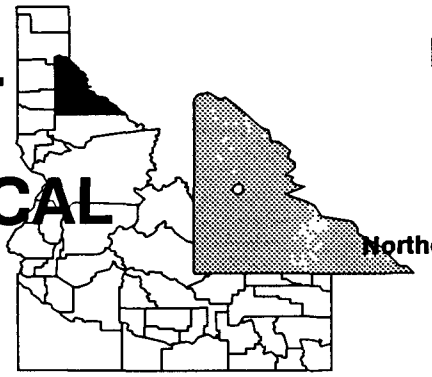
## Environmental Progress

Contaminated containers, structures, and soils have been removed from the ARRCOM (Drexler Enterprises) site, thereby eliminating the threat of exposure to hazardous materials at the site. The EPA has determined that no further actions are needed and expects to delete the site from the NPL in late 1992.

## Site Repository

Rathdrum Branch Library, 731 South First Street, Rathdrum, ID 83858

# BUNKER HILL MINING & METALLURGICAL
## IDAHO
EPA ID# IDD048340921



**EPA REGION 10**
Shoshone County
Smelterville

**Other Names:**
**Northern Idaho Phosphate Company**

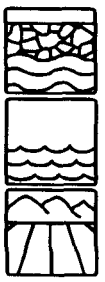
## Site Description

The Bunker Hill Mining and Metallurgical Complex site covers 21 square miles and encompasses the communities of Pinehurst, Page, Smelterville, Kellogg, and Wardner. The facility includes the Bunker Hill mine, a mill and concentrator, a lead smelter, an electrolytic zinc plant, a phosphoric acid and fertilizer plant, a cadmium plant, and sulfuric acid plants. Mining operations began in 1889, with lead smelting starting in 1917. During the majority of the time the smelters were operating, few environmental protection procedures or controls were used. As a result, there is widespread contamination of soil, water, and air from lead and other heavy metals. Prior to 1938, all liquid and solid residues of mine tailings from the complex were discharged directly into the Coeur d'Alene River and its tributaries. Thereafter, waste streams were directed to a large outwash plain located west of Kellogg and just north of the Bunker Hill complex. Lead smelter slag was deposited in a pile on the western end of this plain. On the eastern end of the plain, a central impoundment area was developed and was surrounded by a 70-foot high dike of mine tailings and waste rock. All liquid wastes, including mine pump effluent, were directed to the pond for settling and then discharged to the river. In the early 1970s, a central treatment plant was constructed on the edge of the pond to treat water before discharging it to the river; however, a considerable amount of seepage is lost to groundwater through the unsealed bottom of the pond. In 1973, public concern arose over the effects of chronic air pollution associated with Bunker Hill operations after a fire occurred in the baghouse of the smelter. Smokestack and other emissions from the smelting operations have contaminated the hillsides and other areas surrounding the complex, destroying large areas of vegetation. In the 1970s, the smelter owners began a revegetation program; however, large areas still remain unvegetated. All operations are inactive, and Bunker Hill has filed for bankruptcy. The population of Shoshone County is approximately 19,200. The City of Kellogg, the largest community in the county, with a population of approximately 3,400, is about a mile from the former Bunker Hill Complex. Most residences in the area use municipal water supplies obtained from surface water. However, there may be some private wells in the area.

**Site Responsibility:** This site is being addressed through Federal, State, and potentially responsible parties' actions.

**NPL LISTING HISTORY**
Proposed Date: 12/30/82
Final Date: 09/08/83

## Threats and Contaminants

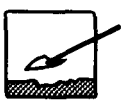


Groundwater, sediments, soils, and surface water contain heavy metals including lead, cadmium, and zinc. People may be exposed to health risks by coming in direct contact with, accidentally ingesting, or inhaling contaminated groundwater, soil, surface water, or sediments. In 1982, a significant number of Kokanee trout returned to the South Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River, which had been totally devoid of fish below Kellogg for many years. Improved conditions can be attributed to the installation of the treatment facilities for wastes that once were discharged untreated into the river. Because of elevated levels of lead in the blood of children around Kellogg, airborne lead was a cause for alarm in the early 1970s. Closure of the smelter complex and intervention by both State and Federal officials reduced blood lead levels.

## Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in three stages: immediate actions and two long-term remedial phases focusing on cleanup of the residential soils and the non-populated areas.

### Response Action Status



**Immediate Actions:** In 1986, the EPA removed approximately 8,750 cubic yards of contaminated soils from sixteen public areas, such as parks and playgrounds, and stored it on site. About 7,150 cubic yards of backfill, 13,500 square feet of sod, and 1,132 tons of asphalt pavement were used in the renovation operations. The EPA stored all excavated contaminated soil in a temporary on-site storage facility. The waste soils were placed within a polyvinyl chloride envelope and were surrounded with a containment dike to minimize surface runoff. This initial action was completed with the installation of a security fence around the temporary storage facility. In 1991, over 140,000 trees were planted and 27 miles of terraces were constructed. In 1992, another 400,000 trees will be planted and work on terraces and erosion control structures will continue.

**Residential Soils:** In 1989, the EPA developed a residential soil removal program. Yards chosen for the program contained soil lead levels of 1,000 parts per million or greater and were households where children or expectant mothers resided. By late 1991, over 300 residential properties had been cleaned up, with approximately 100 more planned for 1992. In late 1991, a remedy was selected for residential soils calling for the eventual cleanup of all yards with soil lead levels greater than 1000 parts per million. Design and construction should begin late in 1993. A pilot program was completed to determine if furniture and carpets can be cleaned of contaminated dust. This investigation was completed in 1991. The study recommends continued interior cleaning of house dust by residents, while exterior sources of contamination are controlled by the EPA and the State. The need for interior cleanup will re-examined once exterior sources of contamination have been controlled.

**Non-Populated Areas:** In 1989, Gulf Resources and Bunker Limited Partnership began initial actions in the non-populated areas, under monitoring by the EPA. Several thousand feet of fence were installed around the smelter, a copper dross flue dust pile was stabilized, and a substantial amount of deteriorating asbestos was removed. In late 1991, Bunker Limited Partnership began removal of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) transformers and treatment of acid-mercury sludges. Other waste materials are being stabilized. This work is expected to continue until the remedy for the non-populated areas is selected and designs of the selected remedy are underway. In addition, Gulf Resources, under EPA guidance, is conducting an investigation to determine the extent and type of contamination in the non-populated areas. The field work for the investigation has been completed. A final report of the investigation and the proposed plan are scheduled to be issued in 1992.

**Site Facts:** In 1987, the EPA and Gulf Resources signed an Administrative Order, under which the company agreed to conduct an investigation of the site. In 1989, Gulf Resources and Bunker Limited Partnership were ordered to initiate immediate cleanup actions. In 1991, a second Unilateral Order was issued requiring Bunker Limited Partnership to perform initial actions in the non-populated areas.

## Environmental Progress

The EPA and the potentially responsible parties have conducted many cleanup efforts at the Bunker Hill site. Among these actions, which have helped to reduce the potential for exposure to contaminants are: removal and storage of contaminated soil from residential properties and public areas and placement in a secure containment facility on the site, construction of a security fence around this area, treatment and restoration of 219 yards of the affected homes and two apartment complexes homes in the area, and the continued household dust abatement pilot program. Removal of wastes from the non-populated areas are keeping this area safe while studies continue.

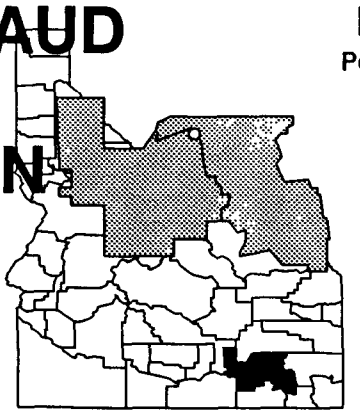
## Site Repository

Kellogg Public Library, 16 West Market Avenue, Kellogg, ID 83837

# EASTERN MICHAUD FLATS CONTAMINATION

## IDAHO

EPA ID# IDD984666610



**EPA REGION 10**

Power and Bannock Counties
Near Pocatello

**Other Names:**
**FMC Corporation**
**J.R. Simplot**

## Site Description

The Eastern Michaud Flats Contamination site covers 2,530 acres near Pocatello. Within the site boundaries are two adjacent phosphate processing facilities, the FMC Corporation and the J.R. Simplot Company. The FMC Corporation has operated a phosphate processing plant, producing approximately 250 million pounds of elemental phosphorus per year from two million tons of shale, silica, and coke. The wastes generated from this process include waste slag, ferrous-phosphate solid residuals, precipitator dust, phossy water, slag cooling water, non-contact cooling water, and calciner scrubber water, all of which contain heavy metals. Waste slag has in the past been used as highway construction materials or has been deposited on two large on-site waste piles. The ferrous-phosphate residuals are crushed, stored on bare ground, and later sold for their vanadium, iron, and chromium content. The precipitator dust slurry and cooling and process water are pumped to 18 waste ponds; one of these is unlined. The J.R. Simplot facility is located adjacent to the FMC facility. Since 1944, J.R. Simplot has produced concentrated phosphoric acid, triple super phosphate, ammonium phosphate, and diamonium phosphate from phosphate-containing ore. Ground phosphate rock is digested with sulfuric acid to produce phosphoric acid and calcium sulfate (gypsum). Gypsum is pumped as a thick slurry to a stack, which presently contains approximately 28 million cubic yards of waste. A former gypsum stack was abandoned in 1966. The J.R. Simplot facility currently uses a wastewater treatment system consisting of three lined ponds and two unlined ponds to collect and treat all wastewater not recycled. In 1976, a drinking water well downhill from the FMC facility was condemned by the State due to elevated arsenic levels. Contaminants have been found in the deep confined aquifer. Approximately 55,000 people use drinking water from public and private wells within 3 miles of the site. The closest private well is about 800 feet from an on-site lagoon. Groundwater also is used to irrigate about 2,000 acres of forage crops within 3 miles of the site. The Michaud Flats are on the Snake River Plain and are bordered by the American Falls Reservoir, the Portneuf River, Rock Creek, and on the south by the foothills of the Deep Creek Mountains and Bannock Range. The Portneuf River, which is 1/4 mile from the site, is used for fishing, recreation, and irrigation downstream from the site.

**Site Responsibility:** This site is being addressed through Federal and potentially responsible parties' actions.

**NPL LISTING HISTORY**
Proposed Date: 05/05/89
Final Date: 08/30/90

## Threats and Contaminants

Groundwater contains heavy metals such as fluoride, lead, arsenic, cadmium, and selenium. Sediments contain similar heavy metals, with the addition of copper, vanadium, and zinc. Contaminants are leaching from the unlined waste ponds into the shallow and deep groundwater aquifers. Drinking or coming into direct contact with the contaminated groundwater or sediments may pose a health threat. Additional exposure may result from the dust and vapors from plant roads, waste pits, and wastewater ponds. There is no alternative, unthreatened water supply readily available to private well users outside of the Pocatello City limits.

## Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in a single long-term remedial phase directed at cleanup of the entire site.

### Response Action Status

**Entire Site:** In 1991, a study was initiated to determine the nature and extent of contamination at the site. Based on the results of the study, the most appropriate remedies will be recommended for site cleanup. A decision on cleanup methods is scheduled for 1994.

**Site Facts:** The entire site is being investigated as a result of an Administrative Order on Consent signed by the FMC Corporation and J.R. Simplot.

## Environmental Progress

After proposing the Eastern Michaud Flats site for listing on the NPL, the EPA performed preliminary evaluations and determined that no immediate actions were necessary while the investigations leading to the selection of a permanent remedy for the site contamination are being planned.

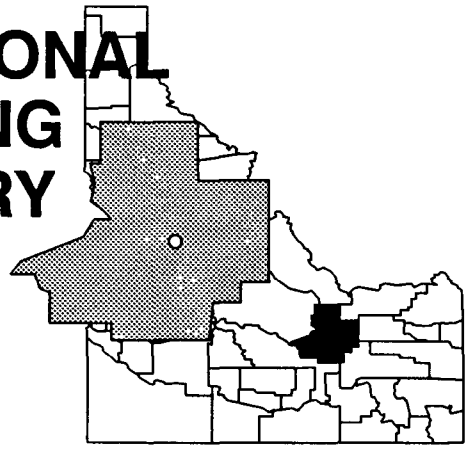
## Site Repository

Not established.

# IDAHO NATIONAL ENGINEERING LABORATORY (USDOE)

## IDAHO

EPA ID# ID4890008952



**EPA REGION 10**

Butte County
Near Idaho Falls

**Other Names:**
**Idaho Operations Office**

## Site Description

The Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL) site, now owned by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), covers 890 square miles in southeastern Idaho, near Idaho Falls. The Atomic Energy Commission set up the National Reactor Testing Station on the grounds in 1949 to build, test, and operate various nuclear reactors, fuel processing plants, and support facilities. Earlier, parts of the site were used by the Department of Defense (DOD). In 1974, the facility assumed its present name to reflect the broad scope of engineering activities it conducts. INEL consists of a number of major facilities, which contribute contaminants to the Snake River Plain Aquifer and draw water from the Snake River Plain Aquifer. Approximately 17,300 tons of hazardous materials were deposited at one area through an injection well extending 100 feet into the Snake River Plain Aquifer and also into numerous unlined ponds and an earthen ditch. Waste materials disposed of in this area included chromium-contaminated cooling tower blow down water, waste solvents, sulfuric acid, radionuclides, and laboratory wastes. The Snake River Plain Aquifer is the source of all water used at the INEL and is an important water resource in southeastern Idaho. Although the three adjacent facilities at the INEL are several miles apart, they will be considered together for this site cleanup due to the extent of chromium contamination. Over 3,000 people draw water from wells within a 3-mile radius of the site. The facility employs approximately 10,500 people. The nearest large population center is Idaho Falls, which is approximately 30 miles to the east of the site.

**Site Responsibility:** This site is being addressed through Federal actions.

**NPL LISTING HISTORY**
Proposed Date: 07/14/89
Final Date: 11/21/89

## Threats and Contaminants

Hexavalent chromium has been detected in monitoring and drinking water wells in the Snake River Plain Aquifer at the Test Reactor and Central Facilities Area at the INEL. Acetone, sodium hydroxide, sulfuric acid, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) were detected to a lesser degree. Tests conducted in 1987 by INEL and the U.S. Geological Survey at the Radioactive Waste Management complex on the site indicate that carbon tetrachloride and trichloroethylene (TCE) have migrated from where they were buried to the Snake River Plain Aquifer. Potential health risks may exist from drinking or coming in direct contact with the contaminated groundwater.

## Cleanup Approach

This site is being addressed by ten long-term remedial phases focusing on the Test Area North of the INEL, the Test Reactor Area, the Central Facilities Area, the Power Burst Facility and Auxiliary Reactor Area, the Radioactive Waste Management Complex, the Naval Reactors Facility, the Idaho Chemical Processing Plant, the Experimental Breeder Reactor, the Argonne National Laboratory, and the Snake River Plain Aquifer.

### Response Action Status

**Test Area North:** The DOE is scheduled to begin several studies of the drinking water at the Test Area North of the INEL in mid-1993. The sub-sites being investigated under this phase of the cleanup include tanks, spill sites, pits, rubble disposal areas, a burn pit, injection wells, and wastewater disposal systems. The boundaries of the sub-sites are fenced to keep trespassers out. An interim drinking water remedy for the Test Area North is scheduled for completion in mid-1992.

**Test Reactor Area:** The Test Reactor Area houses extensive facilities for studying the effects of radiation on materials, fuels, and equipment. A study of perched water is ongoing at this area and a remedy was selected for the warm wastewater pond. Cleanup of the warm wastewater pond will entail excavation of the pond sediments, separation of the sediments by size and chemical extraction of cesium-137, cobalt-60, and chromium from the sediments using an acid solution. After the sediments have been separated from the contaminants, they will be further treated and used to backfill the pond. In addition, the pond area will be revegetated. Design of these activities will begin in mid-1993. Further studies to determine the comprehensive nature and extent of contamination at the Test Reactor Area will continue until late 1998.

**Central Facilities Area:** The DOE began an investigation into the nature and extent of contamination at the motor pool pond of the Central Facilities Area in late 1991. This investigation is scheduled for completion in late 1992 and will be used to develop alternatives for cleanup of this part of the Central Facilities Area. Other studies of the Central Facilities Area is scheduled to begin in early 1993.

**Power Burst/Auxiliary Reactor Area:** In late 1991, the DOE began studies of the contamination at the Power Burst Facility evaporation pond and the Auxiliary Reactor Area chemical pond. These studies are scheduled for completion in 1992 and will be used to determine alternatives for cleanup of these parts of the Power Burst Facility/Auxiliary Reactor Area. Additional studies of this sub-site will focus on tanks and components of wastewater disposal facilities and are scheduled to begin in early 1997.

**Radioactive Waste Management Complex:** The primary focus of the studies of the Radioactive Waste Management complex is the Subsurface Disposal Area. It includes numerous pits, trenches, and vaults where radioactive and organic wastes were stored as will as a large pad where waste was placed above grade and covered. In late 1991, the DOE began studies of the contamination at the Radioactive Waste Management Complex Pad A, Pit 9, and shallow groundwater. The Pit 9 study is scheduled for completion in mid-1992. The studies of the shallow groundwater and Pad A are expected to be completed in 1994. Additional studies of this sub-site are scheduled to begin in 1996. The entire complex is fenced and the Subsurface Disposal Area is a fenced area within the perimeter fence.

**Naval Reactors Facility:** Areas of concern at the Naval Reactors Facility include landfills, old spills, wastewater disposal systems, and storage areas. In mid-1992, the DOE is planning to undertake an investigation into the nature and extent of contamination at the Naval Reactors Facility Ditch. Additional studies are planned for 1996.

**Remaining Areas:** Additional studies are scheduled to begin at the Idaho Chemical Processing Plant, Experimental Breeder Reactor, Argonne National Laboratory, and Snake River Plain Aquifer sub-sites starting in 1996. These studies will be used to determine alternatives for cleanup of these parts of the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory site.

**Site Facts:** In July 1987, the EPA and INEL signed a Consent Order calling for site investigation and cleanup. An Interagency Agreement for cleanup of the entire site was signed in December 1991. This agreement supersedes the previous Consent Order.

## Environmental Progress

After the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory site was added to the NPL, the EPA conducted preliminary studies into the site conditions and determined that no emergency or immediate activities were necessary while investigations leading to the selection of final cleanup alternatives for the site are being planned.

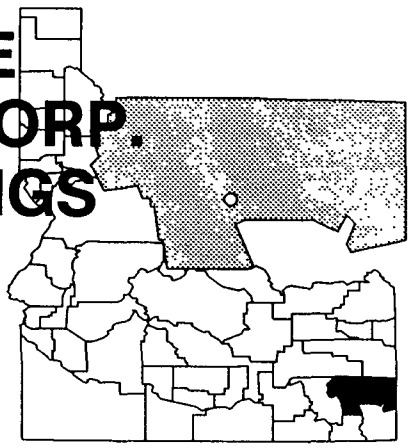
## Site Repository

INEL Technical Library, 1776 Science Center Drive, Idaho Falls, ID 83415

# KERR-MCGEE CHEMICAL CORP. (SODA SPRINGS PLANT)

## IDAHO

EPA ID# IDD041310707



**EPA REGION 10**

Caribou County
1 mile north of Soda Springs

**Other Names:**
**Soda Springs Plant**

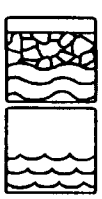
## Site Description

The Kerr-McGee Chemical Corporation (Soda Springs Plant) site covers 158 acres and is located a mile north of Soda Springs. The site is in a broad, flat valley near the western base of the Aspen Range. Since 1963, the plant has generated a number of liquid wastes and stored them in on-site ponds. The Monsanto Chemical Company, another large industrial complex nearby that also is on the NPL, supplies Kerr-McGee with the by-product ferrous-phosphate solids that are processed into vanadium pentoxide. The two largest on-site ponds hold over 12,000 cubic yards of waste. The hazardous chemicals found in these ponds are vanadium, arsenic, copper, and silver. Groundwater beneath the site has been affected by the chemicals in the holding ponds. Approximately 23 people live within a mile of the site, and about 3,000 people live within 3 miles of the site. Public springs and private wells that provide drinking water to over 3,000 people and a private well that irrigates 165 acres are located within 3 miles of the site. Significant agricultural crops in the area include wheat and hay.

**Site Responsibility:** This site is being addressed through a combination of Federal and potentially responsible parties' actions.

**NPL LISTING HISTORY**
Proposed Date: 05/05/89
Final Date: 10/04/89

## Threats and Contaminants



On-site monitoring wells and ponds contain vanadium, arsenic, copper, and silver. Potential health risks may exist from drinking contaminated groundwater or coming into direct contact with or inhalation of blowing dust. The topography in the area prevents the migration of contaminants to surface water off the site.

## Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in a single long-term remedial phase focusing on cleanup of the entire site.

### Response Action Status

**Entire Site:** An investigation to determine the nature and extent of contamination at the site began in 1990. Two rounds of on-site and off-site sampling have occurred to date. Samples have been taken of groundwater, surface water, soil, and source material. Preparation for additional studies are underway. The EPA will be conducting a human health and ecological risk assessment. Once the investigations are completed, planned for late 1994, the EPA will select a remedy for the site.

**Site Facts:** In September 1990, an Administrative Order on Consent was signed by the EPA and Kerr-McGee. Under this order, Kerr-McGee agreed to conduct the site studies.

## Environmental Progress

After listing the Kerr-McGee site on the NPL, the EPA determined, based on preliminary evaluations, that no immediate cleanup actions were required while the extensive investigation leading to the selection of the final cleanup remedies for the site is taking place.

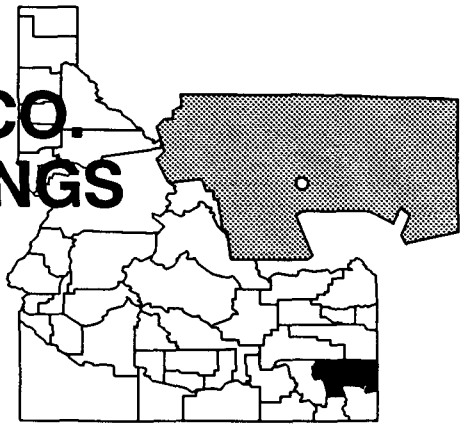
## Site Repository

Soda Springs Public Library, 149 South Main, Soda Springs, ID 83267

# MONSANTO CHEMICAL CO. (SODA SPRINGS PLANT)

## IDAHO

EPA ID# IDD081830994



**EPA REGION 10**
Caribou County
North of Soda Springs

## Site Description

The Monsanto Chemical Company (Soda Springs Plant) encompasses 530 acres and processes locally mined phosphate ore to produce elemental phosphorus. The facility consists of over a dozen administrative and processing buildings plus ore piles, slag piles, by-product materials, surface impoundments and a waste landfill. The site was purchased by Monsanto in 1952. Approximately one million tons of phosphate ore are processed through the plant each year. Ore is stockpiled on site prior to being processed for introduction into electric arc furnaces along with coke and silica. All process waters, with the exception of non-contact cooling water, are held and treated on site and then reused. The non-contact cooling water is discharged from the site to Soda Creek, which is used in agricultural irrigation. The process wastes, previously stored in unlined ponds or impoundments, have been pinpointed as sources of contamination to the local groundwater. Other potential sources of pollution include waste slag, windborne dust emissions, and air emissions from ore processing and the electric arc furnaces. All currently active process wastewater impoundments have been lined. Soil from the old ponds has been removed and backfilled with clean cover material. A network of approximately 52 monitoring wells is maintained to assess plume migration. Land use in the vicinity of the Monsanto facility is primarily industrial and agricultural. The plant is staffed with about 400 employees, and 3,100 residents live within 3 miles of the site. Most of the residents' water is supplied by the Town of Soda Springs from springs located north of the plant. The closest surface water is Soda Creek, located approximately 2,000 feet west of the facility. Many of the nearby residents depend on domestic wells, but most of these wells are upgradient of the site.

**Site Responsibility:** This site is being addressed through a combination of Federal and potentially responsible parties' actions.

**NPL LISTING HISTORY**
Proposed Date: 05/05/89
Final Date: 08/30/90

## Threats and Contaminants

Groundwater underlying the site and the surrounding vicinity is contaminated with cadmium, selenium, vanadium, and fluoride. A health threat may exist for individuals who use or come into direct contact with contaminated groundwater.

## Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in a single long-term remedial phase directed at cleanup of the entire site.

### Response Action Status

**Entire Site:** An investigation into the type and extent of contamination began in 1991. At the conclusion of the investigation, scheduled for late 1994, recommendations of effective alternatives for the final cleanup of the site will be made.

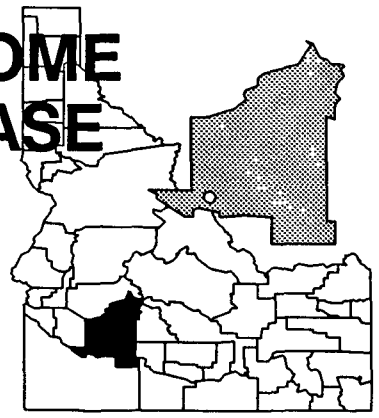
## Environmental Progress

After proposing the Monsanto site for inclusion on the NPL, the EPA performed preliminary evaluations of the site conditions and determined that the site does not pose an imminent threat to the surrounding communities or the environment while the investigation leading to the selection of the final cleanup alternatives is taking place.

## Site Repository

Soda Springs Public Library, 149 South Main, Soda Springs, ID 83276

# MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE
## IDAHO
EPA ID# ID3572124557



**EPA REGION 10**
Elmore County
Southwest of Mountain Home

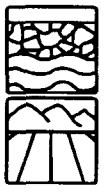
## Site Description

Mountain Home Air Force Base was established in 1943 and is located on approximately 9 square miles of land on a plateau southwest of Mountain Home. The base has been under the control of the Tactical Air Command since 1965. Hazardous materials have been used for aircraft maintenance and industrial operations. Wastes, some hazardous, have been generated from these operations at Mountain Home. Prior to 1969, base wastes were disposed of by several methods that were acceptable at that time, including incineration and landfilling of solid wastes, discharge of liquid wastes to sanitary sewers, and the use of waste oil for road oiling. The facilities of concern at the base include two abandoned landfills, a waste oil disposal site, one existing and four abandoned fire training areas, and an entomology shop yard where pesticides were rinsed from application equipment. Wastes disposed of at these locations include waste oils, solvents, and pesticides. The area around the base is primarily agricultural. Wells supporting approximately 14,000 people and land irrigation are 3 miles from hazardous substances on the base. On-base water supply wells are the only source of drinking water for base residents and workers.

**Site Responsibility:** This site is being addressed through Federal actions.

**NPL LISTING HISTORY**
Proposed Date: 07/14/89
Final Date: 08/30/90

## Threats and Contaminants



Bromoform from solvent use was detected in on-site drinking water wells in 1987. Trichloroethylene (TCE), lead, and cadmium also have been found in the groundwater. Contaminants in wastes on site included the pesticides DDT, dieldrin, and lindane, in addition to carbon tetrachloride and bromoform. Drinking or coming into direct contact with contaminated groundwater may pose a health risk.

## Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in three long-term remedial phases focusing on cleanup of the base landfills, the fire training pit, and the base wells area.

### Response Action Status

**Base Landfills:** An investigation into the type and extent of contamination at this portion of the base was begun in early 1991. At the conclusion of the investigation in mid-1993, recommendations will be made for the most effective alternatives for cleaning up the landfills.

**Fire Training Pit:** An investigation into the type and extent of contamination at the fire training pit began in late 1991. At the conclusion of the investigation, expected in mid-1992, recommendations will be made for the appropriate alternatives for cleaning up the area.

**Base Wells Area:** In 1992, an investigation began to determine the type and extent of contamination of groundwater related to other potential hazardous sites on the base, including old fire training areas, old waste oil disposal areas, and ordnance disposal areas. Once the investigation has been completed, expected in mid-1993, recommendations will be made for the most effective cleanup alternatives.

**Site Facts:** The Mountain Home Air Force Base is participating in the Installation Restoration Program, a specially funded program established by the Department of Defense (DOD) in 1978 to identify, investigate, and control the migration of hazardous contaminants at military and other DOD facilities.

## Environmental Progress

After listing this site on the NPL, the EPA conducted preliminary evaluations and determined that the site does not pose an immediate threat to human health or the environment. The Air Force, under guidance from the EPA, is conducting investigations at several contamination areas which will lead to the selections of the most appropriate permanent cleanup alternatives for these areas of the Mountain Home Air Force Base site.

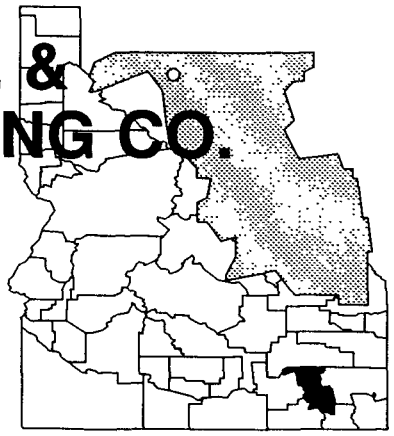
## Site Repository

Mountain Home Public Library, 790 North 10th, East, Mountain Home, ID 84647

# PACIFIC HIDE & FUR RECYCLING CO.

## IDAHO

EPA ID# IDD098812878



**EPA REGION 10**

Bannock County
Pocatello

**Other Names:**
**McCarthy's Pacific Hide & Fur**

## Site Description

The Pacific Hide & Fur Recycling Company site covers approximately 17 acres near commercial and residential areas in Pocatello. The site was used as a metal salvage yard from the late 1950s to 1983. The current owner of the site is McCarthy's, Inc. Most of the site has been used for the disposal of scrap metal including vehicles, truck bodies, machinery, wire rope, tin cans, and other debris. At the center of the site is a 20-foot-deep gravel pit where battery casings, spent automotive oil filters, and other debris were disposed of, as well as transformers and capacitors containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). The Union Pacific Railroad Co. site is located approximately 300 yards from the site. The Portneuf River is located about 1,100 feet south of the site. The population of the City of Pocatello is 44,900 people; however, only a few people live in the immediate area of the site. The city is supplied with drinking water from wells within 3 miles of the site. Private and industrial wells draw from the lower aquifer that lies under the site.

**Site Responsibility:** This site is being addressed through a combination of Federal and potentially responsible parties' actions.

**NPL LISTING HISTORY**
Proposed Date: 09/08/83
Final Date: 09/21/84

## Threats and Contaminants

Soils, both on and off the site, are contaminated with PCBs, lead, and other inorganic compounds from prior waste disposal activities. Adverse health effects may result from accidentally ingesting or making direct contact with contaminated soil.

## Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in three stages: emergency actions and two long-term remedial phases focusing on cleanup of the soils and lead contamination.

### Response Action Status

**Emergency Actions:** In 1983, the EPA removed 593 capacitors, 30 cubic yards of contaminated soils, and 21 drums containing hazardous materials. Monitoring wells and a security fence around 11 acres of the site also were installed. The decontamination of large scrap materials was accomplished in 1989.

**Soils:** In 1988, the following remedies were selected for cleanup of the site: excavation of soil to an average of 1 1/2 feet, followed by screening to separate large contaminated materials and testing for further contamination; stabilization of the most highly contaminated soil using a fixation technique; construction of a bottom clay liner, where necessary; capping of the stabilized and remaining materials; and deed and access restrictions. Because the fixation technology was found to be impracticable, on-site containment activities were originally selected. However, additional studies performed at the site indicated the presence of lead in soils at unacceptable concentrations. Based on these results, the EPA postponed the remedy for on-site containment of the PCB-contaminated soil until the lead contamination could be fully characterized. In early 1992, an amendment to the remedy was issued. The amendment called for excavation of PCB- and mixed PCB/lead-contaminated soils. Lead-contaminated soils which are above EPA standards will be stabilized prior to disposal in an off-site permitted landfill. Soils containing halogenated organic compounds above EPA standards will be incinerated, and the ash will be placed in an off-site landfill. All other contaminated soils will be placed in an EPA approved off-site landfill. Site restoration will follow decontamination of any scrap which remains under protective cover on site. This amended remedy is expected to begin in the summer of 1992.

**Lead Contamination:** The EPA is planning to initiate an investigation exploring the nature and extent of lead and other metal contamination of the soil. This study, scheduled to begin in mid-1992, is currently in negotiation as to who will be responsible for the work.

## Environmental Progress

By conducting an emergency removal action and constructing a security fence to restrict access to the Pacific Hide & Fur Recycling site, the potential for exposure to hazardous materials was significantly reduced while cleanup is underway.

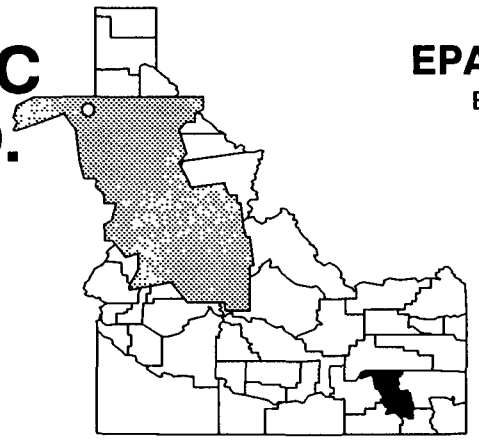
## Site Repository

Pocatello Public Library, 812 East Clarke Street, Pocatello, ID 83201

# UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD CO.

## IDAHO

EPA ID# IDD055030852



**EPA REGION 10**

Bannock County
Pocatello

## Site Description

The Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRR) site comprises about 1 acre in Pocatello. From 1961 until 1983, UPRR dumped sludge from its oil/water separation plant into a 1-acre unlined sludge pit. The Pacific Hide & Fur Recycling Co. site, another NPL site, is located approximately 300 yards from the pit. There are approximately 45,000 people living within 4 miles of the site, but very few people live in the immediate area. Private and municipal wells are located within a mile of the site. Private wells in the area are screened in the lower aquifer. The municipal wells for the City of Pocatello are located within 3 miles of the site.

**Site Responsibility:** This site is being addressed through a combination of Federal, State, and potentially responsible parties' actions.

**NPL LISTING HISTORY**
Proposed Date: 09/08/83
Final Date: 09/21/84

## Threats and Contaminants

Private drinking water wells were found to be contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including trichloroethylene (TCE). The greatest threat to groundwater is the migration of contaminants from the Upper Aquifer to the Lower Aquifer. Solvents, TCE, and tetrachloroethylene were found in groundwater near the sludge pit, but the levels were below EPA standards. The sludge/soil material in the pit area is contaminated with heavy metals; including cadmium, lead, chromium, arsenic, zinc; polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs); mercury; and organic solvents. The sludge pit area is completely fenced, restricting public access. The potential health threats of greatest concern are drinking contaminated groundwater and performing household activities with untreated groundwater from private wells that draw from the Upper Aquifer. On-site industrial workers accidentally ingesting contaminated soil also is a concern. Studies also have confirmed that runoff from the site does not flow from the sludge pit into the nearby Portneuf River.

## Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in a single long-term remedial phase focusing on cleanup of the entire site.

### Response Action Status

**Entire Site:** The EPA selected a cleanup approach in 1991. The selected cleanup methods include excavating and disposing of sludge and silt off site, backfilling and capping excavated areas, extracting and treating groundwater, monitoring groundwater, and instituting deed restrictions. Design activities are expected to begin in mid-1992, with cleanup actions scheduled to follow in mid-1993.

**Site Facts:** In 1988, the EPA and the UPRR signed an Administrative Order, requiring UPRR to conduct a study of the nature and extent of contamination at the site and to recommend cleanup alternatives. In 1992, the EPA and UPRR signed a Consent Decree requiring UPRR to perform design and cleanup actions.

## Environmental Progress

While design of cleanup activities is taking place, the EPA has determined that the site does not pose an imminent threat to the surrounding population or the environment.

## Site Repository

Pocatello Public Library, 812 East Clarke Street, Pocatello, ID 83201

# GLOSSARY

## Terms Used in the NPL Book

*This glossary defines terms used throughout the NPL Volumes. The terms and abbreviations contained in this glossary apply specifically to work performed under the Superfund program in the context of hazardous waste management. These terms may have other meanings when used in a different context. A table of common toxic chemicals found at NPL sites, their sources, and their potential threats is located on page G-15*

**Acids:** Substances, characterized by low pH (less than 7.0), that are used in chemical manufacturing. Acids in high concentration can be very corrosive and react with many inorganic and organic substances. These reactions possibly may create toxic compounds or release heavy metal contaminants that remain in the environment long after the acid is neutralized.

**Administrative Order On Consent:** A legal and enforceable agreement between the EPA and the parties potentially responsible for site contamination. Under the terms of the Order, the potentially responsible parties (PRPs) agree to perform or pay for site studies or cleanups. It also describes the oversight rules, responsibilities, and enforcement options that the government may exercise in the event of non-compliance by potentially responsible parties. This Order is signed by PRPs and the government; it does not require approval by a judge.

**Administrative Order [Unilateral]:** A legally binding document issued by the EPA, directing the parties potentially responsible to perform site cleanups or studies (generally, the EPA does not issue Unilateral Orders for site studies). This type of Order is not signed by the PRPs and does not require approval by a judge.

**Aeration:** A process that promotes breakdown of contaminants in soil or water by exposing them to air.

**Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR):** The Federal agency within the U.S. Public Health Service charged with carrying out the health-related responsibilities of CERCLA.

**Air Stripping:** A process whereby volatile organic chemicals (VOCs) are removed from contaminated material by forcing a stream of air through the contaminated material in a pressurized vessel. The contaminants are evaporated into the air stream. The air may be further treated before it is released into the atmosphere.

**Ambient Air:** Any unconfined part of the atmosphere. Refers to the air that may be inhaled by workers or residents in the vicinity of contaminated air sources.

**Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirements (ARARs):** Federal, State, or local laws which apply to Superfund activities at NPL sites. Both emergency and long-term actions must comply with these laws or provide sound reasons for allowing a waiver. ARARs must be identified for each site relative to the characteristics of the site, the substances found at the site, or the cleanup alternatives being considered for the site.

# GLOSSARY

**Aquifer:** An underground layer of rock, sand, or gravel capable of storing water within cracks and pore spaces, or between grains. When water contained within an aquifer is of sufficient quantity and quality, it can be tapped and used for drinking or other purposes. The water contained in the aquifer is called groundwater. A "sole source aquifer" supplies 50 percent or more of the drinking water of an area.

**Artesian (Well):** A well made by drilling into the earth until water is reached, which, due to internal pressure, flows up like a fountain.

**Asbestos:** A mineral fiber that can pollute air or water and is known to cause cancer or asbestosis when inhaled.

**Attenuation:** The naturally occurring process by which a compound is reduced in concentration over time through adsorption, degradation, dilution, or transformation.

**Background Level:** The amount of a substance typically found in the air, water, or soil from natural, as opposed to human, sources.

**Baghouse Dust:** Dust accumulated in removing particulates from the air by passing it through cloth bags in an enclosure.

**Bases:** Substances characterized by high pH (greater than 7.0), which tend to be corrosive in chemical reactions. When bases are mixed with acids, they neutralize each other, forming salts.

**Berm:** A ledge, wall, or a mound of earth used to prevent the migration of contaminants.

**Bioaccumulate:** The process by which some contaminants or toxic chemicals gradually collect and increase in concentration in living tissue, such as in plants, fish, or people, as they breathe contaminated air, drink contaminated water, or eat contaminated food.

**Biological Treatment:** The use of bacteria or other microbial organisms to break down toxic organic materials into carbon dioxide and water.

**Bioremediation:** A cleanup process using naturally occurring or specially cultivated microorganisms to digest contaminants and break them down into non-hazardous components.

**Bog:** A type of wetland that is covered with peat moss deposits. Bogs depend primarily on moisture from the air for their water source, are usually acidic, and are rich in plant residue [see Wetland].

**Boom:** A floating device used to contain oil floating on a body of water or to restrict the potential overflow of waste liquids from containment structures.

**Borehole:** A hole that is drilled into the ground and used to sample soil or ground-water.

**Borrow Pit:** An excavated area where soil, sand, or gravel has been dug up for use elsewhere.

**Cap:** A layer of material, such as clay or a synthetic material, used to prevent rainwater from penetrating and spreading contaminated materials. The surface of the cap generally is mounded or sloped so water will drain off.

**Carbon Adsorption:** A treatment system in which contaminants are removed from groundwater and surface water by forcing water through tanks containing activated carbon, a specially treated material that attracts and holds or retains contaminants.

**Carbon Disulfide:** A degreasing agent formerly used extensively for parts washing. This compound has both inorganic and organic

properties, which increase cleaning efficiency. However, these properties also cause chemical reactions that increase the hazard to human health and the environment.

**Carbon Treatment:** [see Carbon Adsorption].

**Cell:** In solid waste disposal, one of a series of holes in a landfill where waste is dumped, compacted, and covered with layers of dirt.

**CERCLA:** [see Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act].

**Characterization:** The sampling, monitoring, and analysis of a site to determine the extent and nature of toxic releases. Characterization provides the basis for acquiring the necessary technical information to develop, screen, analyze, and select appropriate cleanup techniques.

**Chemical Fixation:** The use of chemicals to bind contaminants, thereby reducing the potential for leaching or other movement.

**Chromated Copper Arsenate:** An insecticide/herbicide formed from salts of three toxic metals: copper, chromium, and arsenic. This salt is used extensively as a wood preservative in pressure-treating operations. It is highly toxic and water-soluble, making it a relatively mobile contaminant in the environment.

**Cleanup:** Actions taken to eliminate a release or threat of release of a hazardous substance. The term "cleanup" sometimes is used interchangeably with the terms remedial action, removal action, response action, or corrective action.

**Closure:** The process by which a landfill stops accepting wastes and is shut down under Federal guidelines that ensure the protection of the public and the environment.

**Comment Period:** A specific interval during which the public can review and comment on various documents and EPA actions related to site cleanup. For example, a comment period is provided when the EPA proposes to add sites to the NPL. Also, there is minimum 3-week comment period for community members to review and comment on the remedy proposed to clean up a site.

**Community Relations:** The EPA effort to establish and maintain two-way communication with the public. The goals of community relations programs include creating an understanding of EPA programs and related actions, assuring public input into decision-making processes related to affected communities, and making certain that the Agency is aware of, and responsive to, public concerns. Specific community relations activities are required in relation to Superfund cleanup actions [see Comment Period].

**Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA):** Congress enacted the CERCLA, known as Superfund, in 1980 to respond directly to hazardous waste problems that may pose a threat to the public health and the environment. The EPA administers the Superfund program.

**Confluence:** The place where two bodies of water, such as streams or rivers, come together.

**Confined Aquifer:** An aquifer in which groundwater is confined under pressure that is significantly greater than atmospheric pressure.

**Consent Decree:** A legal document, approved and issued by a judge, formalizing an agreement between the EPA and the parties potentially responsible for site contamination. The decree describes cleanup actions that the potentially responsible parties are required to perform, or the costs incurred by the government that the parties will reimburse, and the roles, responsibilities, and enforcement options that the government may exercise in the event of non-compliance by potentially responsible parties. If a settlement between the EPA and a potentially responsible party includes cleanup actions, it must be in the form of a Consent Decree. A Consent Decree is subject to a public comment period.

**Consent Order:** [see Administrative Order on Consent].

**Containment:** The process of enclosing or containing hazardous substances in a structure, typically in a pond or a lagoon, to prevent the migration of contaminants into the environment.

**Contaminant:** Any physical, chemical, biological, or radiological material or substance whose quantity, location, or nature produces undesirable health or environmental effects.

**Contingency Plan:** A document setting out an organized, planned, and coordinated course of action to be followed in case of a fire, explosion, or other accident that releases toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes, or radioactive materials into the environment.

**Cooperative Agreement:** A contract between the EPA and the States, wherein a State agrees to manage or monitor certain site cleanup responsibilities and other activities on a cost-sharing basis.

**Cost Recovery:** A legal process by which potentially responsible parties can be required to pay back the Superfund program for money it spends on any cleanup actions [see Potentially Responsible Parties].

**Cover:** Vegetation or other material placed over a landfill or other waste material. It can be designed to reduce movement of water into the waste and to prevent erosion that could cause the movement of contaminants.

**Creosotes**: Chemicals used in wood preserving operations and produced by distillation of tar, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons [see PAHs and PNAs]. Contaminating sediments, soils, and surface water, creosotes may cause skin ulcerations and cancer through prolonged exposure.

**Culvert:** A pipe used for drainage under a road, railroad track, path, or through an embankment.

**Decommission:** To revoke a license to operate and take out of service.

**Degradation:** The process by which a chemical is reduced to a less complex form.

**Degrease:** To remove grease from wastes, soils, or chemicals, usually using solvents.

**Deletion:** A site is eligible for deletion from the NPL when Superfund response actions at the site are complete. A site is deleted from the NPL when a notice is published in the Federal Register.

**De minimis:** This legal phrase pertains to settlements with parties who contributed small amounts of hazardous waste to a site. This process allows the EPA to settle with small, or *de minimis* contributors, as a single group rather than as individuals, saving time, money, and effort.

**Dewater:** To remove water from wastes, soils, or chemicals.

**Dike:** A low wall that can act as a barrier to prevent a spill from spreading.

**Dioxin:** An organic chemical by-product of pesticide manufacture which is known to be one of the most toxic man-made chemicals.

**Disposal:** Final placement or destruction of toxic, radioactive, or other wastes; surplus or banned pesticides or other chemicals; polluted soils; and drums containing hazardous materials. Disposal may be accomplished through the use of approved secure landfills, surface impoundments, land farming, deep well injection, or incineration.

**Downgradient:** A downward hydrologic slope that causes groundwater to move toward lower elevations. Therefore, wells *downgradient* of a contaminated groundwater source are prone to receiving pollutants.

**Ecological Assessment:** A study of the impact of man-made or natural activity on living creatures and their environment.

**Effluent:** Wastewater, treated or untreated, that flows out of a treatment plant, sewer, or industrial outfall. Generally refers to wastes discharged into surface waters.

**Emission:** Pollution discharged into the atmosphere from smokestacks, other vents, and surface areas of commercial or industrial facilities.

**Emulsifiers:** Substances that help in mixing materials that do not normally mix; e.g., oil and water.

**Endangerment Assessment:** A study conducted to determine the risks posed to public health or the environment by contamination at NPL sites. The EPA or the State conducts the study when a legal action is to be taken to direct the potentially responsible parties to clean up a site or pay for the cleanup. An endangerment assessment supplements an investigation of the site hazards.

**Enforcement:** EPA, State, or local legal actions taken against parties to facilitate settlements; to compel compliance with laws, rules, regulations, or agreements; or to obtain penalties or criminal sanctions for violations. Enforcement procedures may vary, depending on the specific requirements of different environmental laws and related regulatory requirements. Under CERCLA, for example, the EPA will seek to require potentially responsible parties to clean up a Superfund site or pay for the cleanup [see Cost Recovery].

**Erosion:** The wearing away of land surface by wind or water. Erosion occurs naturally from weather or surface runoff, but can be intensified by such land-related practices as farming, residential or industrial development, road building, or timber-cutting. Erosion may spread surface contamination to off-site locations.

**Estuary (estuarine):** Areas where fresh water from rivers and salt water from nearshore ocean waters are mixed. These areas may include bays, mouths of rivers, salt marshes, and lagoons. These water ecosystems shelter and feed marine life, birds, and wildlife.

**Evaporation Ponds:** Areas where sewage sludge or other watery wastes are dumped and allowed to dry out.

**Feasibility Study:** The analysis of the potential cleanup alternatives for a site. The feasibility study usually starts as soon as the remedial investigation is underway. In this volume, the feasibility study is referred to as a site study [see also Remedial Investigation].

**Filtration:** A treatment process for removing solid (particulate) matter from water by passing the water through sand, activated carbon, or a man-made filter. The process is often used to remove particles that contain contaminants.

**Flood Plain:** An area along a river, formed from sediment deposited by floods. Flood plains periodically are innundated by natural floods, which can spread contamination.

**Flue Gas:** The air that is emitted from a chimney after combustion in the burner occurs. The gas can include nitrogen oxides, carbon oxides, water vapor, sulfur oxides, particles, and many chemical pollutants.

**Fly Ash:** Non-combustible residue that results from the combustion of flue gases. It can include nitrogen oxides, carbon oxides, water vapor, sulfur oxides, as well as many other chemical pollutants.

**French Drain System:** A crushed rock drain system constructed of perforated pipes, which is used to drain and disperse wastewater.

**Gasification (coal):** The conversion of soft coal into gas for use as a fuel.

**General Notice Letter:** [See Notice Letter].

**Generator:** A facility that emits pollutants into the air or releases hazardous wastes into water or soil.

**Good Faith Offer:** A voluntary offer, generally in response to a Special Notice letter, made by a potentially responsible party, consisting of a written proposal demonstrating a potentially responsible party's qualifications and willingness to perform a site study or cleanup.

**Groundwater:** Water that fills pores in soils or openings in rocks to the point of saturation. In aquifers, groundwater occurs in sufficient quantities for use as drinking and irrigation water and other purposes.

**Groundwater Quality Assessment:** The process of analyzing the chemical characteristics of groundwater to determine whether any hazardous materials exist.

**Halogens:** Reactive non-metals, such as chlorine and bromine. Halogens are very good oxidizing agents and, therefore, have many industrial uses. They are rarely found by themselves; however, many chemicals such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), some volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and dioxin are reactive because of the presence of halogens.

**Hazard Ranking System (HRS):** The principal screening tool used by the EPA to evaluate relative risks to public health and the environment associated with abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. The HRS calculates a score based on the potential of hazardous substances spreading from the site through the air, surface water, or groundwater and on other factors such as nearby population. The HRS score is the primary factor in deciding if the site should be on the NPL.

**Hazardous Waste:** By-products of society that can pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health and the environment when improperly managed. Hazardous waste possesses at least one of four characteristics (ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity, or toxicity), or appears on special EPA lists.

**Heavy Metals:** Metallic elements with high atomic weights, such as arsenic, lead, mercury, and cadmium. Heavy metals are very hazardous even at low concentrations and tend to accumulate in the food chain.

**Herbicide:** A chemical pesticide designed to control or destroy plants, weeds, or grasses.

**Hot Spot:** An area or vicinity of a site containing exceptionally high levels of contamination.

**Hydrocarbons:** Chemical compounds that consist entirely of hydrogen and carbon.

**Hydrology:** The properties, distribution, and circulation of water.

**Hydrogeology:** The geology of groundwater, with particular emphasis on the chemistry and movement of water.

**Impoundment:** A body of water or sludge confined by a dam, dike, floodgate, or other barrier.

**Incineration:** A group of treatment technologies involving destruction of waste by controlled burning at high temperatures, e.g., burning sludge to reduce the remaining residues to a non-burnable ash that can be disposed of safely on land, in some waters, or in underground locations.

**Infiltration:** The movement of water or other liquid down through soil from precipitation (rain or snow) or from application of wastewater to the land surface.

**Influent:** Water, wastewater, or other liquid flowing into a reservoir, basin, or treatment plant.

**Injection Well:** A well into which waste fluids are placed, under pressure, for purposes of disposal.

**Inorganic Chemicals:** Chemical substances of mineral origin, not of basic carbon structure.

**Installation Restoration Program:** The specially funded program established in 1978 under which the Department of Defense has been identifying and evaluating its hazardous waste sites and controlling the migration of hazardous contaminants from those sites.

**Intake:** The source from where a water supply is drawn, such as from a river or water body.

**Interagency Agreement:** A written agreement between the EPA and a Federal agency that has the lead for site cleanup activities, setting forth the roles and responsibilities of the agencies for performing and overseeing the activities. States often are parties to interagency agreements.

**Interim (Permit) Status:** Conditions under which hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities, that were operating when regulations under the RCRA became final in 1980, are temporarily allowed by the EPA to continue to operate while awaiting denial or issuance of a permanent permit. The facility must comply with certain regulations to maintain interim status.

**Lagoon:** A shallow pond or liquid waste containment structure. Lagoons typically are used for the storage of wastewaters, sludges, liquid wastes, or spent nuclear fuel.

**Landfarm:** To apply waste to land or incorporate waste into the surface soil, such as fertilizer or soil conditioner. This practice commonly is used for disposal of composted wastes and sludges.

**Landfill**: A disposal facility where waste is placed in or on land. *Sanitary* landfills are disposal sites for non-hazardous solid wastes. The waste is spread in layers, compacted to the smallest practical volume, and covered with soil at the end of each operating day. Secure *chemical* landfills are disposal sites for hazardous waste. They are designed to minimize the chance of release of hazardous substances into the environment [see Resource Conservation and Recovery Act].

**Leach, Leaching [v.t.]:** The process by which soluble chemical components are dissolved and carried through soil by water or some other percolating liquid.

**Leachate [n]:** The liquid that trickles through or drains from waste, carrying soluble components from the waste.

**Leachate Collection System:** A system that gathers liquid that has leaked into a landfill or other waste disposal area and pumps it to the surface for treatment.

**Liner:** A relatively impermeable barrier designed to prevent leachate (waste residue) from leaking from a landfill. Liner materials include plastic and dense clay.

**Long-term Remedial Phase:** Distinct, often incremental, steps that are taken to solve site pollution problems. Depending on the complexity, site cleanup activities can be separated into several of these phases.

**Long-term Response Action:** An action which requires a continuous period of on-site activity before cleanup goals are achieved. These actions typically include the extraction and treatment of groundwater and monitoring actions.

**Marsh:** A type of wetland that does not contain peat moss deposits and is dominated by vegetation. Marshes may be either fresh or saltwater and tidal or non-tidal [see Wetland].

**Migration:** The movement of oil, gas, contaminants, water, or other liquids through porous and permeable soils or rock.

**Mill Tailings:** [See Mine Tailings].

**Mine Tailings:** A fine, sandy residue left from mining operations. Tailings often contain high concentrations of lead, uranium, and arsenic or other heavy metals.

**Mitigation:** Actions taken to improve site conditions by limiting, reducing, or controlling toxicity and contamination sources.

**Modeling:** A technique using a mathematical or physical representation of a system or theory that tests the effects that changes on system components have on the overall performance of the system.

**Monitoring Wells:** Special wells drilled at specific locations within, or surrounding, a hazardous waste site where groundwater can be sampled at selected depths and studied to obtain such information as the direction in which groundwater flows and the types and amounts of contaminates present.

**National Priorities List (NPL):** The EPA's list of the most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites identified for possible long-term cleanup under Superfund. The EPA is required to update the NPL at least once a year.

**Natural Attenuation:** [See Attenuation].

**Neutrals:** Organic compounds that have a relatively neutral pH, complex structure and, due to their organic bases, are easily absorbed into the environment. Water is the most commonly known neutral, however, naphthalene, pyrene, and trichlorobenzene also are examples of neutrals.

**Nitroaromatics:** Common components of explosive materials, which will explode if activated by very high temperatures or pressures; 2,4,6-Trinitrotoluene (TNT) is a nitroaromatic.

**Notice Letter:** A General Notice Letter notifies the parties potentially responsible for site contamination of their possible liability. A Special Notice Letter begins a 60-day formal period of negotiation during which the EPA is not allowed to start work at a site or initiate enforcement actions against potentially responsible parties, although the EPA may undertake certain investigatory and planning activities.

The 60-day period may be extended if the EPA receives a good faith offer from the PRPs within that period. [See also Good Faith Offer].

**On-Scene Coordinator (OSC):** The predesignated EPA, Coast Guard, or Department of Defense official who coordinates and directs Superfund removal actions or Clean Water Act oil- or hazardous-spill corrective actions.

**Operation and Maintenance:** Activities conducted at a site after a cleanup action is completed to ensure that the cleanup or containment system is functioning properly.

**Organic Chemicals/Compounds:** Chemical substances containing mainly carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen.

**Outfall:** The place where wastewater is discharged into receiving waters.

**Overpacking:** Process used for isolating large volumes of waste by jacketing or encapsulating waste to prevent further spread or leakage of contaminating materials. Leaking drums may be contained within oversized barrels as an interim measure prior to removal and final disposal.

**Pentachlorophenol (PCP):** A synthetic, modified petrochemical that may be used as a wood preservative because of its toxicity to termites and fungi. It is a common component of creosotes and can cause cancer.

**Perched (groundwater):** Groundwater separated from another underlying body of groundwater by a confining layer, often clay or rock.

**Percolation:** The downward flow or filtering of water or other liquids through subsurface rock or soil layers, usually continuing downward to groundwater.

**Pesticide:** A substance or mixture of substances intended to prevent, destroy, or repel any pest. If misused, pesticides can accumulate in the foodchain and contaminate the environment.

**Petrochemicals:** Chemical substances produced from petroleum in refinery operations and as fuel oil residues. These include fluoranthene, chrysene, mineral spirits, and refined oils. Petrochemicals are the bases from which volatile organic compounds (VOCs), plastics, and many pesticides are made. These chemical substances often are toxic to humans and the environment.

**Phenols:** Organic compounds that are used in plastics manufacturing and are by-products of petroleum refining, tanning, textile, dye, and resin manufacturing. Phenols are highly poisonous.

**Physical Chemical Separation:** The treatment process of adding a chemical to a substance to separate the compounds for further treatment or disposal.

**Pilot Testing:** A small-scale test of a proposed treatment system in the field to determine its ability to clean up specific contaminants.

**Plugging:** The process of stopping the flow of water, oil, or gas into or out of the ground through a borehole or well penetrating the ground.

**Plume:** A body of contaminated groundwater flowing from a specific source. The movement of the groundwater is influenced by such factors as local groundwater flow patterns, the character of the aquifer in which groundwater is contained, and the density of contaminants [see Migration].

**Pollution:** Generally, the presence of matter or energy whose nature, location, or quantity produces undesired health or environmental effects.

**Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons or Polyaromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs):** PAHs, such as pyrene, are a group of highly reactive organic compounds found in motor oil. They are a common component of creosotes and can cause cancer.

**Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs):** A group of toxic chemicals used for a variety of purposes including electrical applications, carbonless copy paper, adhesives, hydraulic fluids, microscope immersion oils, and caulking compounds. PCBs also are produced in certain combustion processes. PCBs are extremely persistent in the environment because they are very stable, non-reactive, and highly heat resistant. Chronic exposure to PCBs is believed to cause liver damage. It also is known to bioaccumulate in fatty tissues. PCB use and sale was banned in 1979 with the passage of the Toxic Substances Control Act.

**Polynuclear Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PNAs):** PNAs, such as naphthalene, and biphenyls, are a group of highly reactive organic compounds that are a common component of creosotes, which can be carcinogenic.

**Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC):** A plastic made from the gaseous substance vinyl chloride. PVC is used to make pipes, records, raincoats, and floor tiles. Health risks from high concentrations of vinyl chloride include liver cancer and lung cancer, as well as cancer of the lymphatic and nervous systems.

**Potable Water:** Water that is safe for drinking and cooking.

**Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs):** Parties associated with a Superfund site who may be liable for the cost of remedying the release of hazardous substances. This may include owners or operators of the site or transporters who disposed of materials at the site. PRPs may admit liability, or liability may be determined by a court of law. PRPs may sign a Consent Decree or Administrative Order on Consent to participate in the site cleanup without admitting liability.

**Precipitation:** The removal of solids from liquid waste so that the solid and liquid portions can be disposed of safely; the removal of particles from airborne emissions. Electrochemical precipitation is the use of an anode or cathode to remove the hazardous chemicals. Chemical precipitation involves the addition of some substance to cause the solid portion to separate.

**Preliminary Assessment:** The process of collecting and reviewing available information about a known or suspected waste site or release to determine if a threat or potential threat exists.

**Pump and Treat:** A groundwater cleanup technique involving the extracting of contaminated groundwater from the subsurface and the removal of contaminants, using one of several treatment technologies.

**Radionuclides:** Elements, including radium and uranium-235 and -238, which break down and produce radioactive substances due to their unstable atomic structure. Some are man-made, and others are naturally occurring in the environment. Radon, the gaseous form of radium, decays to form alpha particle radiation, which cannot be absorbed through skin. However, it can be inhaled, which allows alpha particles to affect unprotected tissues directly and thus cause cancer. Radiation also occurs naturally through the breakdown of granite.

**RCRA:** [See Resource Conservation and Recovery Act].

**Recharge Area:** A land area where rainwater saturates the ground and soaks through the earth to reach an aquifer.

**Record of Decision (ROD):** A public document that explains which cleanup alternative(s) will be used to clean up sites listed on the NPL. It is based on information generated during the remedial investigation and feasibility study and consideration of public comments and community concerns.

**Recovery Wells:** Wells used to withdraw contaminants or contaminated groundwater.

**Recycle:** The process of minimizing waste generation by recovering usable products that might otherwise become waste.

**Remedial Action (RA):** The actual construction or implementation phase of a Superfund site cleanup following the remedial design [see Cleanup].

**Remedial Design:** A phase of site cleanup where engineers design the technical specifications for cleanup remedies and technologies.

**Remedial Investigation:** An in-depth study designed to gather the data necessary to determine the nature and extent of contamination at a Superfund site, establish the criteria for cleaning up the site, identify the preliminary alternatives for cleanup actions, and support the technical and cost analyses of the alternatives. The remedial investigation is usually done with the feasibility study. In this volume, the remedial investigation is referred to as a site study [see also Feasibility Study].

**Remedial Project Manager (RPM):** The EPA or State official responsible for overseeing cleanup actions at the site.

**Remedy Selection:** The selection of the final cleanup strategy for the site. At the few sites where the EPA has determined that initial response actions have eliminated site contamination, or that any remaining contamination will be naturally dispersed without further cleanup activities, a "No Action" remedy is selected [see Record of Decision].

**Removal Action:** Short-term immediate actions taken to address releases of hazardous substances [see Cleanup].

**Residual:** The amount of a pollutant remaining in the environment after a natural or technological process has taken place, e.g., the sludge remaining after initial wastewater treatment, or the particulates remaining in air after the air passes through a scrubber.

**Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA):** A Federal law that established a regulatory system to track hazardous substances from the time of generation to disposal. The law requires safe and secure procedures to be used in treating, transporting, storing, and disposing of hazardous substances. RCRA is designed to prevent new, uncontrolled hazardous waste sites.

**Retention Pond:** A small body of liquid used for disposing of wastes and containing overflow from production facilities. Sometimes retention ponds are used to expand the capacity of such structures as lagoons the store waste.

**Runoff:** The discharge of water over land into surface water. It can carry pollutants from the air and land and spread contaminants from its source.

**Scrubber:** An air pollution control device that uses a spray of water or reactant or a dry process to trap pollutants in emissions.

**Sediment:** The layer of soil, sand, and minerals at the bottom of surface waters such as streams, lakes, and rivers, that absorbs contaminants.

**Seeps:** Specific points where releases of liquid, usually leachate, form from waste disposal areas, particularly along the lower edges of landfills.

**Seepage Pits:** A hole, shaft, or cavity in the ground used for the storage of liquids, usually in the form of leachate, from waste disposal areas. The liquid gradually leaves the pit by moving through the surrounding soil.

**Septage:** Residue remaining in a septic tank after the treatment process.

**Sinkhole:** A hollow depression in the land surface in which drainage collects; associated with underground caves and passages that facilitate the movement of liquids.

**Site Characterization:** The technical process used to evaluate the nature and extent of environmental contamination, which is necessary for choosing and designing cleanup measures and monitoring their effectiveness.

**Site Inspection:** The collection of information from a hazardous waste site to determine the extent and severity of hazards posed by the site. It follows, and is more extensive than, a preliminary assessment. The purpose is to gather information necessary to score the site, using the Hazard Ranking System, and to determine if the site presents an immediate threat that requires a prompt removal action.

**Slag:** The fused refuse or dross separated from a metal in the process of smelting.

**Sludge:** Semi-solid residues from industrial or water treatment processes that may be contaminated with hazardous materials.

**Slurry Wall:** Barriers used to contain the flow of contaminated groundwater or subsurface liquids. Slurry walls are constructed by digging a trench around a contaminated area and filling the trench with an impermeable material that prevents water from passing through it. The groundwater or contaminated liquids trapped within the area surrounded by the slurry wall can be extracted and treated.

**Smelter:** A facility that melts or fuses ore, often with an accompanying chemical change, to separate the metal. Emissions from smelters are known to cause pollution.

**Soil Gas:** Gaseous elements and compounds that occur in the small spaces between particles of soil. Such gases can move through or leave the soil or rock, depending on changes in pressure.

**Soil Vapor Extraction:** A treatment process that uses vacuum wells to remove hazardous gases from soil.

**Soil Washing:** A water-based process for mechanically scrubbing soils in-place to remove undesirable materials. There are two approaches: dissolving or suspending them in the wash solution for later treatment by conventional methods, and concentrating them into a smaller volume of soil through simple particle size separation techniques [see Solvent Extraction].

**Stabilization:** The process of changing an active substance into inert, harmless material, or physical activities at a site that act to limit the further spread of contamination without actual reduction of toxicity.

**Solidification/Stabilization:** A chemical or physical reduction of the mobility of hazardous constituents. Mobility is reduced through the binding of hazardous constituents into a solid mass with low permeability and resistance to leaching.

**Solvent:** A substance capable of dissolving another substance to form a solution. The primary uses of industrial solvents are as cleaners for degreasing, in paints, and in pharmaceuticals. Many solvents are flammable and toxic to varying degrees.

**Solvent Extraction:** A means of separating hazardous contaminants from soils, sludges, and sediment, thereby reducing the volume of the hazardous waste that must be treated. It generally is used as one in a series of unit operations. An organic chemical is used to dissolve contaminants as opposed to water-based compounds, which usually are used in soil washing.

**Sorption:** The action of soaking up or attracting substances. It is used in many pollution control systems.

**Special Notice Letter:** [See Notice Letter].

**Stillbottom:** Residues left over from the process of recovering spent solvents.

**Stripping:** A process used to remove volatile contaminants from a substance [see Air Stripping].

**Sumps:** A pit or tank that catches liquid runoff for drainage or disposal.

**Superfund:** The program operated under the legislative authority of the CERCLA and Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) to update and improve environmental laws. The program has the authority to respond directly to releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances that may endanger public health, welfare, or the environment. The "Superfund" is a trust fund that finances cleanup actions at hazardous waste sites.

**Surge Tanks:** A holding structure used to absorb irregularities in flow of liquids, including liquid waste materials.

**Swamp:** A type of wetland that is dominated by woody vegetation and does not accumulate peat moss deposits. Swamps may be fresh or saltwater and tidal or non-tidal [see Wetlands].

**Thermal Treatment:** The use of heat to remove or destroy contaminants from soil.

**Treatability Studies:** Testing a treatment method on contaminated groundwater, soil, etc., to determine whether and how well the method will work.

**Trichloroethylene (TCE):** A stable, colorless liquid with a low boiling point. TCE has many industrial applications, including use as a solvent and as a metal degreasing agent. TCE may be toxic to people when inhaled, ingested, or through skin contact and can damage vital organs, especially the liver [see Volatile Organic Compounds].

**Unilateral [Administrative] Order:** [see Administrative Order].

**Upgradient:** An upward hydrologic slope; demarks areas that are higher than contaminated areas and, therefore, are not prone to contamination by the movement of polluted groundwater.

**Vacuum Extraction:** A technology used to remove volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from soils. Vacuum pumps are connected to a series of wells drilled to just above the water table. The wells are sealed tightly at the soil surface, and the vacuum established in the soil draws VOC-contaminated air from the soil pores into the well, as fresh air is drawn down from the surface of the soil.

**Vegetated Soil Cap:** A cap constructed with graded soils and seed for vegetative growth, to prevent erosion [see Cap].

**Vitrification:** The process of electrically melting wastes and soils or sludges to bind the waste in a glassy, solid material more durable than granite or marble and resistant to leaching.

**Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs):** VOCs are manufactured as secondary petrochemicals. They include light alcohols, acetone, trichloroethylene, perchloroethylene, dichloroethylene, benzene, vinyl chloride, toluene, and methylene chloride. These potentially toxic chemicals are used as solvents, degreasers, paints, thinners, and fuels. Because of their volatile nature, they readily evaporate into the air, increasing the potential exposure to humans. Due to their low water solubility, environmental persistence, and widespread industrial use, they are commonly found in soil and groundwater.

**Waste Treatment Plant:** A facility that uses a series of tanks, screens, filters, and other treatment processes to remove pollutants from water.

**Wastewater:** The spent or used water from individual homes or industries.

**Watershed:** The land area that drains into a stream or other water body.

**Water Table:** The upper surface of the groundwater.

**Weir:** A barrier to divert water or other liquids.

**Wetland:** An area that is regularly saturated by surface or groundwater and, under normal circumstances, is capable of supporting vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands are critical to sustaining many species of fish and wildlife. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, and bogs. Wetlands may be either coastal or inland. Coastal wetlands have salt or brackish (a mixture of salt and fresh) water, and most have tides, while inland wetlands are non-tidal and freshwater. Coastal wetlands are an integral component of estuaries.

**Wildlife Refuge:** An area designated for the protection of wild animals, within which hunting and fishing are either prohibited or strictly controlled.

# Some Common Contaminants at NPL Sites

| Contaminant Category | Example Chemical Types | Sources | Potential Health Threats* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Heavy Metals | Arsenic, Barium, Beryllium, Cadmium, Cobalt, Copper, Chromium, Lead, Manganese, Mercury, Nickel, Silver, Selenium, Zinc | Electroplating, batteries, paint pigments, photography, smelting, thermometers, fluorescent lights, solvent recovery | Tumors, cancers, and kidney, brain, neurological, bone and liver damage |
| Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) | Trichloroethylene (TCE), Perchloroethylene (PCE), Acetone, Benzene, Ketone, Methyl chloride, Toluene, Vinyl Chloride, Dichlorethylene | Solvents and degreasers, gasoline octane enhancers, oils and paints, dry cleaning fluids, chemical manufacturing. | Cancers, kidney and liver damage, impairment of the nervous system resulting in sleepiness and headaches, leukemia |
| Pesticides/ Herbicides | Chlordane, DDT 4-4, DDE, Heptachlor, Aldrin, Endrin, Atrazine, Dieldrin, Toxaphene | Agricultural applications, pesticide and herbicide production | Various effects ranging from nausea to nervous disorders. Dioxin is a common by-product of the manufacture of pesticides and is both highly toxic and a suspected carcinogen. |
| Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) | — | Electric transformers and capacitors, insulators and coolants, adhesives, caulking compounds, carbonless copy paper, hydraulic fluids. | Cancer and liver damage. |
| Creosotes | Polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), Polynuclear aromatics (PNAs), Phenolic Tars, Pentachlorophenol (PCP) | Wood preserving, fossil fuel combustion | Cancers and skin ulcerations with prolonged exposure |
| Radiation (Radionuclides) | Radium-226, Radon, Uranium-235, Uranium-238 | Mine tailings, radium products, natural decay of granites | Cancer |

*Sources:* *Toxic Chemicals—What They Are, How They Affect You (EPA, Region 5)*
*Glossary of Environmental Terms (EPA, 1988)*

**The potential for risk due to these contaminants is linked to a number of factors; for example, the length and level of exposure and environmental and health factors such as age.*

* U.S. G.P.O.:1993-341-835:81038