

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF WASTE MANAGEMENT



JAMES B. HUNT JR.
GOVERNOR

WAYNE McDEVITT
SECRETARY

WILLIAM L. MEYER
DIRECTOR

August 16, 1999

Mr. Myron D. Lair, Chief
Emergency Response and Removal Branch
U.S. EPA Region IV
61 Forsyth Street, 11th Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Subject: Immediate Removal Evaluation Request
Mills Gap Road Groundwater Contamination
Asheville, Buncombe County, NC

Dear Mr. Lair:

The NC Superfund Section requests that the U.S. EPA evaluate the Mills Gap Road Groundwater Contamination site for a possible removal action. The site thus far includes one contaminated well and one contaminated spring used for drinking water supply by residents along or near Mills Gap Road. This area is located approximately 3/4 mile west of Skyland southeast of Asheville in Buncombe County.

The contaminated well and spring are both located approximately 1500' southeast and downgradient of the CTS of Asheville site (NCD 003 149 556). The CTS site was listed in CERCLIS and assigned a NFRAP disposition in 1991 based on the Site Investigation conducted by the EPA FIT contractor. At that time, the nearest well was believed to be 4,000' northwest of CTS and was not found to be contaminated. CTS of Asheville manufactured electronic products and conducted electroplating operations on site from around 1964 until 1986. TCE was used at the CTS site and stored in an above-ground storage tank on site which has reportedly been removed. High levels of TCE (53,000 ppb) were identified in subsurface soils near a waste sump outside the plating room at CTS in an earlier study. The current owner of the CTS property is Stan Greenburg (828) 252-5300. The property is currently leased as warehouse space.

401 OBERLIN ROAD, SUITE 150, RALEIGH, NC 27605
PHONE 919-733-4996 FAX 919-715-3605

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER - 50% RECYCLED/10% POST-CONSUMER PAPER

Mr. Myron D. Lair
August 16, 1999
page 2

In early July 1999, the NC Division of Water Quality, Groundwater Section was contacted regarding an oily leachate in a ditch on the Larry Rice, Sr. Property at 273 Mills Gap Road. On July 9 the ditch liquid was sampled and on July 12 two springs on the neighboring properties (Larry Rice, Jr. and Terry Rice) were sampled. The Larry Rice, Sr. property is served by city water from Asheville. The ditch sample (lab no. 9G1286) contained low levels of chlorinated solvents and petroleum constituents (see attached map and sample analyses). One spring sample (lab no. 9G1298) contained **15,000 ppb TCE**, 570 ppb 1,1,1-TCA, and 370 ppb cis-1,2-dichloroethene (DCE) as well as petroleum constituents. This spring was used for water supply until about 5 years ago when it was abandoned due to taste problems. The second spring sample (lab no. 9G1297) contained **21,000 ppb TCE**, as well as other chlorinated solvents. This spring was being used as a water supply for the Larry Rice, Jr. residence (1 adult) and the Terry Rice residence (2 adults with young children visiting on occasion). These residents were advised to cease use of their spring and are currently using city water obtained by a temporary hookup from their parents residence (Larry Rice, Sr.). Their homes are not directly hooked to city water although a line does run past their homes along Mills Gap Road.

On July 28, 1999, the Groundwater Section identified 9 wells used for drinking water within a 1/2 mile radius of the CTS site and sampled those wells for volatile organics. The locations of those wells along with the owners names and phone numbers are attached. Only one well, at the Robinson residence, 10 Concord Road, (sample numbers 1 & 2 on the map) showed any contamination. The unfiltered sample from this well contained **270 ppb TCE, 31 ppb cis-1,2- DCE, and 0.63 ppb 1,1,1-TCA**. There is a "rainsoft" water treatment system on the well and the sample collected post-treatment contained **170 ppb TCE and 19 ppb cis-1,2-DCE**. These residents have also been advised not to use their water. They are currently without an alternate water supply and are getting water from neighbors. The Robinson well serves 2 homes providing water to 3 adults and 2 small grandchildren (ages 20 months and 3 years) who are kept during the day. City water is available along Concord Road in front of these 2 homes however residents never hooked up to city water.

The Robinson's have used this well since 1988. Prior to that they used a spring on the property. The Groundwater Section collected a sample from that spring today and expect results in about 10 days.

Both the Rice and Robinson families have requested financial assistance to pay for permanent hookups to city water. State funds are not available for the provision of an alternate water supply at this time. We request that ERRB review the site information and determine whether the site qualifies for a removal action under the federal Superfund program. We request that EPA consider assisting the affected

Mr. Myron D. Lair
August 16, 1999
page 3

residents in obtaining city water. We are currently reviewing the CTS of Asheville site in light of this new information with regard to reopening that site for further investigation under CERCLA. Please let us know the outcome of your review and if and when a field evaluation can be conducted so we may coordinate your site visit with our staff. If you have any questions, please contact me at (919) 733-2801, ext. 290.

Sincerely



Pat DeRosa, Head
Site Evaluation and Removal Branch
Superfund Section

attachments

cc: Jack Butler, DWM
Mike Kelly, DWM
Doug Holyfield, DWM
Phil Prete, DWM
Pat Williamson, DWM
Charlotte Jesneck, DWM
Jesse Wells, DWM ARO
Phil Vorsatz, US EPA
Jennifer Wendel, US EPA (with attachments)
Don Rigger, US EPA (with attachments)
James Ronald Thomas, Buncombe County Health Dept.
Kay Dechant, DWQ ARO