From: Eoc, Epahq
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EOC Spot Report: – Chemical Spill, Charleston, WV – Update #26

US Environmental Protection Agency

Report as of 1700 February 8, 2014

Overview: On January 10, 2014 the President approved an Emergency Declaration for the State of West Virginia after a chemical, 4-methylcyclohexanemethanol, (MCHM) leaked at a Freedom Industries chemical plant and into the Elk River in Charleston, WV. The spill occurred near the Kanawha Valley Water Treatment Plant which detected the chemical even after an increased carbon treatment effort was put in place. Freedom Industries is working to clean up the spill at the facility and in the river.

State, Local and other Federal Agency Actions:
The facility is developing a plan to keep offsite water from flowing into the facility, rather it will be re-routed to discharge directly into the Elk River once analytical data shows that it is clean. This would greatly reduce the amount of water currently being pumped and contained. With the rising water level in the Elk River, attention was focused on maintaining the booms along the affected shoreline. Additionally, preparations were made to minimize the amount of rainfall which could enter the interceptor trench. Plastic sheeting was placed over the surface of the impacted slope and over the trench, allowing fresh rainwater to bypass the trench system and flow directly into the Elk River. A vacuum hose was connected directly to the pipe discharging into the interceptor trench which reduced the volume of water entering the interceptor trench. These changes were made to reduce the chance of the excess water overwhelming the interceptor trench system.

The facility noted that they will submit, via e-mail, an inventory of the onsite tanks to the State and to EPA.

In response to Governor Tomblin's request for assistance, Region 3 has provided statisticians from the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, who will provide assistance to the WV Bureau for Public Health. The Bureau has been charged with developing a sampling plan to assess drinking water in homes served by the WV American Water Company. The facility has

also indicated they have begun shipping product (MCHM/PPH blend) to the Poca facility.

EPA Action:

Region 3's Water Program reported that yesterday EPA had a lengthy call on a potential design for the residential drinking water study. WV Gov. Tomblin had directed the WV Bureau of Public Health (WVBPH) to develop this study. EPA participants (statisticians and contaminant expert from the Office of Water, Region 3 Water Division staff) provided advice and input on the sampling strategy for the proposed study, potential constraints, and potential enhancements, as well as considerations for implementation. Also participating were a WV State Epidemiologist; WV National Guard; CDC epidemiologist; and ATSDR-CDC/Region 3. The Governor is seeking an almost immediate start to the study.

Region 3 reported that CEC completed purging monitoring wells 3, 4, 5, and 6. These monitoring wells are located at the base of the slope behind the facility, downgradient of the tank farm. Following recharge, samples were collected from all four wells. WVDEP and EPA collected split samples from each of the wells. WVDEP noted a petroleum odor in the water in all four wells; however, no MCHM odor was detected in the well water.

A crew remains on site to oversee water pumping operations as needed. The pipe at the front of the containment wall is now estimated to be discharging 1,000 gallons of water per hour. The source of the water is still unknown. In addition, the facility continues to inspect and maintain the boom in the Elk River.

The facility has pumped approximately 100,000 gallons of water, which remains staged at the Poca facility pending treatment and/or disposal. The facility estimates that all product on-site will be shipped off-site by March 15.

Media Interest: Medium

The HQ EOC will continue to monitor and provide updates as needed.

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