To: Eoc, Epahq[Eoc.Epahq@epa.gov]
From: Eoc, Epahq
Sent: Fri 1/31/2014 8:51:06 PM
Subject: EOC Spot Report: Chemical Spill, Charleston WV – Update #23

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EOC Spot Report: Chemical Spill, Charleston WV – Update #23

US Environmental Protection Agency

Report as of 1500 January 30, 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: West Virginia water authorities issued a "Do Not Use Water Notice" for 10 counties and the President's Emergency Declaration covers eight counties. West Virginia American Water Company (WVAWC) customers were told not to use tap water for drinking, cooking, washing, or bathing. Water could be used for toilets and fire emergencies. When the incident originally occurred, it contaminated drinking water for 300,000 people. The emergency declaration was closed on January 20, 2014.

The facility is deepening the intercept trench by the river and installing a water collection system. The section of the trench adjacent to the river slope was excavated to native soil.

During last night's excavation a pipe was inadvertently broken. The pipe, approximately 8 inches in diameter, was discharging water at a rate of approximately 1/4 gal/min and had a slight odor of MCHM. The pipe appears to be an intake line from the river for a former fire suppression system. WVDEP, EPA, the facility and the plaintiff's expert are collecting water samples for analysis. Pumping operations on the trench will continue to prevent flow into the River.

The WVAWC increased their sampling from once every two hours to every hour due to odor complaints last night from the broken pipe. To reassure customers who detected the telltale licorice smell, the water company is taking samples of raw and finished water, which remain at non-detect or low ppb levels.

The facility continues to pump water from upgradient of the secondary containment area. Due to heavy ice conditions in the river, the booms have frozen in place. However, ice continues to be cleared from the outside of the boom to allow boat access to the booms along the facility shoreline.

The facility's remediation consultant, CEC, began redeveloping monitoring wells in preparation for next week's groundwater sampling. They completed redevelopment of three monitoring wells, with the remaining four wells to be developed today (Jan. 31, 2014).

The Chemical Safety Board is onsite and is continuing their investigative work.

EPA Action:

The local media reported that a Marshall University professor found formaldehyde in a drinking water sample from a restaurant in Charleston, WV. EPA continues to leave messages for the Marshall University professor who reported formaldehyde in a drinking water sample from a restaurant in Charleston, WV but has received no response to date. EPA's Ft. Meade lab is also investigating the formaldehyde issue.

EPA Region 3 continues to monitor and provide oversight of facility activities at the

Freedom Industries tank farm site and the Poca staging facility. EPA continues to coordinate with WVDEP and WVAWC.

Media Interest: Medium

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/01/29/west-virginia-chemical-spill-formaldehyde_n_4688419.html

http://www.wvgazette.com/News/201401300040

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

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