From: Eoc, Epahq
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Subject: EOC Spot Report: Chemical Spill, Charleston WV – Update #6

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EOC Spot Report: Chemical Spill, Charleston WV – Update #6

US Environmental Protection Agency

Report as of 1400 January 12, 2014

Overview: On January 10, the President approved an Emergency Declaration for the State of West Virginia after a chemical leaked through a secondary containment area at a Freedom Industries chemical plant and into the Elk River in Charleston, WV (pop. 51,018) (NRC#1070627). The chemical (MCHM) is a flammable solvent used in the coal preparation process and is an irritant to eyes, respiratory system, and skin. The West Virginia Office of Environmental Health Services (OEHS) estimates no more than 5,000 gallons of chemical leaked in the Elk River. Based on river flow dilution, officials calculate the chemical concentration in

the water to be well below the CDC declared safe level. The spill occurred near the Kanawha Valley Water Treatment Plant. The Kanawha Valley Water Treatment Plant detected the chemical even after the 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 have issued a "Do Not Use Water Notice" for 10 counties (Kanawha, Boone, Putnam, Lincoln, Logan, Clay, Roane, Jackson Cabell and Wayne) and the President's Emergency Declaration covers eight counties (Kanawha, Boone, Putnam, Lincoln, Logan, Clay, Roane, and Jackson). West Virginia American Water (WVAW) customers are told not to use tap water for drinking, cooking, washing, or bathing. Water can be used for toilets and fire emergencies. Boiling water will not get rid of the chemical. This is believed to impact 100,000 customers (300,000 people).

The three tanks that held the MCHM are still being removed. As of this morning the tank that failed was still leaking a slow drip of product. The tank will be emptied and cleaned by tomorrow morning. The next step would be to empty and clean the other two tanks, which are holding sludge material mixed with a small amount of product. These tanks can be removed without cutting them into pieces. The tank that failed will be cut up and removed.

WVAW will determine the amount of product in the soil by using a hand auger and geoprobe to collect samples. WVAW is attempting to contract a lab for a 24 hour turnaround time for the samples. The cut-off trench below the storm drain will be extended in length and lined with plastic.

The boom is still deployed in the river. The river's current has increased from the rain on 1/11/14, lessening the effectiveness of the boom. Also the higher river level and increased current speed has increased the amount of debris that is collected in the boom. The boom near the water intake has both skirted boom and absorbent boom, as well as absorbent pads. WV DEP directed WVAW to regularly change out the water intake's absorbent boom when it is visually saturated. There is also a skimmer deployed where the boom is extended across the entire width of the river. Clean Harbors (contractor to WVAW) reported that the sheen is not as visible today because of the speed of the river and that approximately 1000 gallons of the product/water mixture has been recovered in the absorbents, skimmer and by vac truck from the river operations.

EPA Actions: The EPA OSCs met this morning with the WVAW, WV DEP, and USCG and

agreed upon a command structure. Daily meetings will occur to set the tasks for the next operational period. Work will continue 24 hours a day with WV DEP oversight. Today at 4:00 pm the meeting will document the tasks for the next operation period. The Chemical Safety Board (CSB) will be on-site tomorrow morning (1/13/14) to begin their inspection.

Media Interest: High

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

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