EPA Adds New Site to the Superfund List

Wilcox Oil Company Site
Bristow, Creek County, Oklahoma **January 2014**

This fact sheet will tell you about:

- **The National Priorities List (NPL)**
- **The Superfund Process**
- **The Wilcox Oil Company Site**
- **Current status**
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- **What happens next**
- **How EPA and ODEQ involve the public in cleanup decisions**
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The National Priorities List

The National Priorities List, or NPL, is a list of top priority sites to be addressed through the Superfund Law. Initially, 406 sites were listed when established in 1983, currently over 1,685 sites have been indentified and added to the list, while the EPA and the states continue to evaluate potential future sites. With the current rulemaking announcement, the EPA added the Wilcox Oil Company Site to the NPL on December 12, 2013.

The Superfund Process

The Superfund cleanup process begins with site discovery or notification to EPA of possible releases of hazardous substances. Sites are discovered by various parties, including citizens, State agencies, and EPA Regional offices. EPA then evaluates the potential for a release of hazardous substances from the site through a step-by-step process that includes site assessment, site inspections, and a ranking process to determine whether the site should be added to the NPL. Once on this list, EPA determines the best way to clean up the site to protect human health and the environment. Opportunities for community involvement occur throughout the process.

The Wilcox Oil Company Site

Wilcox Oil Company is an inactive and abandoned oil refinery located in Bristow, Creek County, Oklahoma. The site consists of contaminated areas and surface water bodies due to releases from the former Lorraine and former Wilcox Refineries. These former refineries operated from the mid 1920s to the early 1960s. The location of the releases from the two refineries is considered to be a single site composed of a commingled release from the combined refinery operations. The area of the former refineries is approximately 125 acres.

Major operational areas include the former Wilcox Oil Refinery, the Lorraine Refinery, and the product storage area (tank farm). Sources of contamination include contaminated soil, cooling ponds, and numerous tank bottoms. Contaminants of concern include metals and organic compounds in the former storage tank areas, surface soils, surface impoundment and sediments. Elevated levels of metals were also detected in three private residential wells on site, and from three wells adjacent to the property.

Current Status

The EPA is working as the lead agency, in conjunction with the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ), to conduct the Superfund process.

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Activities Completed

At this time the following actions have been completed:

- A Preliminary Assessment conducted by ODEQ in 2008.
- A Site Inspection conducted by ODEQ in 2009.
- An Expanded Site Inspection conducted by ODEQ in 2011.
- A Hazard Ranking System package completed by EPA in May 2013.
- Proposed to the NPL on May 24, 2013.
- Added to the NPL on December 12, 2013.

What Happens Next

A major goal of the Superfund program is to encourage Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs) to remediate hazardous waste sites. This is referred to as the enforcement process which leads to the implementation of the Remedial Investigation/ Feasibility Study (RI/FS). This study determines the nature and extent of contamination, evaluates risks, tests whether certain technologies are capable of treating the contamination, and evaluates the cost and performance of technologies that could be used to clean up the site.

Based on the results of the feasibility study, EPA will develop a Proposed Plan for cleaning up the site.

How EPA and ODEQ Involve the Public

- Request public comments on proposed clean up plans.
- Meet with the public, providing updates and Fact Sheets.
- Mail Fact Sheets to nearby residents and businesses.
- Provide information through Agency websites.
- Provide a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG).

A TAG is available to local citizens' groups to hire a technical advisor to interpret site studies or site-related health information for area residents.

ATSDR Involvement

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) is the principal federal public health agency involved with hazardous waste issues. ATSDR advises the EPA, as well as other federal and state agencies, community members and other interested parties, on the health impacts of Superfund sites. The agency recommends actions that need to be taken to safeguard public health by issuing public health advisories, assessments and consultations.

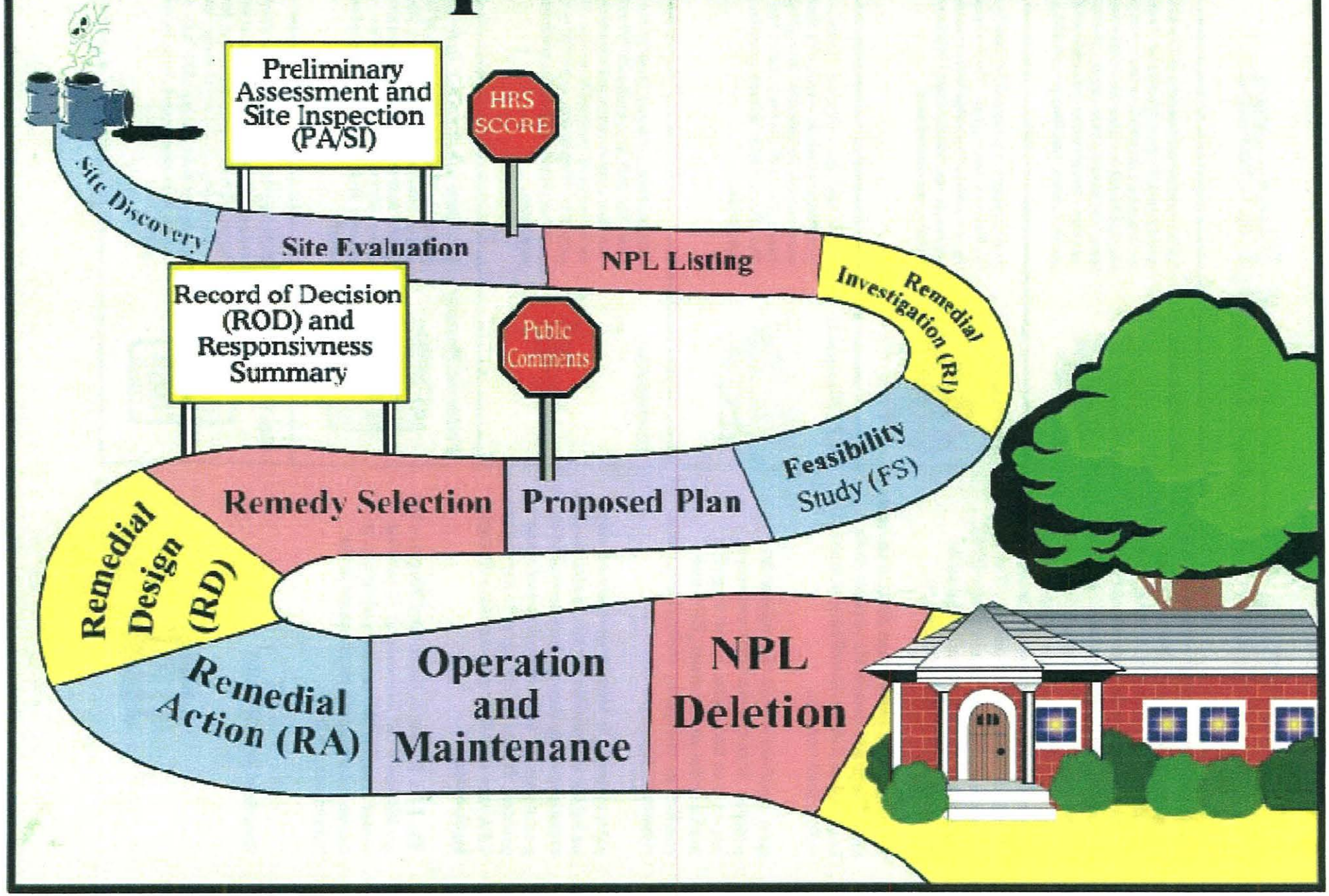
Contacts and More Information

Site Repository

The docket for this Site is available for review at the:

City of Bristow Public Library
111 West 7th Street
Bristow, OK 74010

The Superfund Process



The Superfund Process

The Superfund program was enacted by Congress in December 1980. The law established a program to investigate and initiate actions against actual and potential releases of hazardous chemicals and other substances at sites throughout the United States. In 1986, Congress reauthorized Superfund and increased the size of the fund from $1.6 billion to $8.5 billion. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administers the Superfund program in cooperation with individual states.

The Superfund process can differ from each site. There are usually six phases which begin when a site is identified and concluded with a final remedy.

EPA monitors the site throughout the process. If at any time contamination becomes an immediate threat to public health or the environment, EPA may conduct an emergency action, known as a removal action.

EPA attempts to identify parties who may be legally responsible for site contamination. Once identified, these parties are asked to participate in the investigation and remedial process. If they do not agree to participate, EPA may seek their participation through legal means.

The EPA Region 6, Superfund Program has established a toll free number to provide direct access to the general public and to increase community involvement in the Superfund Program.

Just dial 1-800-533-3508

Identification

Before most people understood how certain wastes might threaten public health and the environment, hazardous wastes were often disposed of at locations where they could either enter the ground, water, or air. Now these sites are being brought to the attention of EPA by private citizens, and local and stated agencies..

Assessment

A preliminary inspection of the site is conducted by EPA or a state agency. The site is assessed for the presence of hazardous chemicals and other substances and their potential impact on public health or the environment.

NPL Placement

If EPA finds that a site poses a serious actual or potential threat to the community, the site is placed on the National Priorities List (NPL), a roster of the nation's worst hazardous waste sites. The NPL currently includes more than 1,100 sites nationwide.

Investigation

EPA conducts a two-part investigation of all NPL sites. The first part, a remedial investigation, identifies contamination and site-related threats to the environment and public health. The second part of the investigation, a feasibility study, evaluates various approaches to addressing site conditions.

Preferred Remedy

EPA selects a preferred remedy for the site from among the alternatives presented in the feasibility study. After EPA recommends its choice, the public, state and local officials are given an opportunity to comment on it. After it considers the comments, EPA selects the final remedy for the site.

Final Remedy

Following the selection of a final remedy, EPA designs and implements the chosen remedy. EPA negotiates with parties responsible for contamination of the site to design, implement and pay for the final remedy. EPA may, through legal action, later recover costs from the responsible parties.

Internet Sites

The EPA NPL site narrative is available online at:
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar1882.htm

ODEQ site information is available online at:
http://www.deq.state.ok.us/lpdnew/SF/Superfund%20Project/SF%20Site%20Summaries/WilcoxRefinery.html

Media Inquiries

Inquiries from the media should be directed to the EPA Region 6 Press Office at 214.665.2200.

Contacts

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