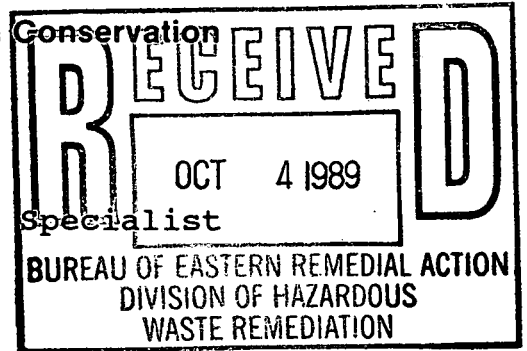




New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

MEMORANDUM

TO: Distribution Below
 FROM: Elizabeth M. Lowe, Citizen Participation Specialist
 SUBJECT: GE Moreau Inactive Hazardous Waste Site
 DATE: September 25, 1989



Attached for your information and use is a fact sheet with an update on recent remedial activities associated with the General Electric Moreau Inactive Hazardous Waste Site.

As you know, this site was used for disposal of products generated by General Electric Company in the 1950's and 60's and included PCB wastes and waste solvents such as trichloroethylene. The migration of these wastes from the disposal area has also contaminated groundwater and residential wells in the area.

Federal District Court Judge Cholakis has recently ruled that the State be allowed to intervene in the USEPA's lawsuit against General Electric. The State moved to intervene in this case in order to challenge EPA's Record of Decision which did not address aquifer restoration.

Please contact me if you feel there are specific aspects of this fact sheet which should be revised before releasing this to the public.

Elizabeth M. Lowe
 Citizen Participation Specialist

EML:bl

cc: Ned Sullivan	Ron Tramontano
Mike O'Toole	Dan Steenberge
Charlie Goddard	Thomas Monroe
Joe Slack	Don Corliss
M. Moore	Shari Chrimes
Frank Bifera	Frank Van Alstyne
Paul Van Cott	Gordon Behn
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Tom Hall	Wiley Lavigne
Brian Fear	

FACT SHEET
GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY - MOREAU
INACTIVE HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE
NO. 546001

The General Electric Moreau inactive hazardous waste site is located just south of the Village of South Glens Falls in the Town of Moreau, Saratoga County. This site was used by General Electric Company as an industrial waste dump during the 1950's and 1960's. Approximately 452 tons of waste material generated by GE were disposed primarily in an evaporation pit.

Following reports by local residents of barrels at the site and a town investigation which found that PCBs had been deposited here, the Town of Moreau and the State tested for PCB contamination in the air, surface water, groundwater and soil in and near the site during 1978. This same year, the Town also covered an evaporation pit used for the disposal of industrial wastes, disposed of a portion of the 100 barrels of liquid PCBs stored on-site and excavated some of the highly PCB contaminated soils from the pit and disposed of them, in an U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved secure landfill.

During 1980, GE signed an administrative consent order with the State whereby General Electric agreed to clean up seven sites at a cost of \$30 million. Cleanup of the Moreau on-site contamination was included in this order. This consent order led to the construction of a 1600' slurry wall around the contaminated area to prevent migration of hazardous waste from the disposal area. Contaminated soils were excavated from a nearby residence and contained within the slurry wall. A clay cap was placed over the materials within the slurry wall.

In September of 1982, the State filed suits against GE in New York Supreme Court, Saratoga County, alleging that the contamination of groundwater and nearby residential wells constituted a public nuisance. The State found trichloroethylene (TCE) in the groundwater below the site and suggested that an alternative water supply be made available to homes in the area that rely on private wells. In response, the Town purchased and installed carbon filters on seventy homes. The site was also placed on the EPA National Priority List of Hazardous Waste Sites in late 1982. The Town of Moreau joined the state's lawsuit against GE in 1987. Pre-trial discovery is still underway.

During the summer of 1983 GE completed soil borings in a field south of the site in an attempt to determine how far trichloroethylene (TCE) had migrated off site. The boring program was terminated when borings revealed that the contaminated groundwater was close enough to residential wells to suggest a significant threat to certain residential drinking water sources.

A consent order under the Federal Superfund Act (CERCLA) signed between GE and Environmental Protection Agency in November of 1983 required the following:

1. Interim remedial measures to a limited number of residences affected by GE chemicals.
2. Full off-site hydrogeology investigation and examination of appropriate remedial alternatives
3. A commitment by GE to undertake appropriate remedial measures.

In 1984, GE began the remedial investigation which focused on groundwater contamination. Sampling conducted under this investigation showed the existence of groundwater contamination attributable to the GE Moreau site. TCE was the primary contaminant detected in this plume, which was found to extend approximately 4,800 feet to the southwest. Contamination was also found at Reardon Brook, which feeds a water supply reservoir for nearby Fort Edward. Extensive soil sampling was also conducted.

During 1985, an air stripper was installed to treat water from Reardon Brook. Also, 8,600 cubic yards of PCB contaminated soils from dirt roads leading to the site were excavated and placed within the perimeter of the slurry wall and covered with a clay cap.

Once the remedial investigation and feasibility study was complete, EPA signed a Record of Decision in July of 1987 which contained EPA's proposed remedy and rationale. EPA's remedial program endorsed the removal and encapsulation of PCB contaminated soils (pursuant to NYS order) and the air stripper on Reardon Brook which were both completed in 1985. The remedial program also requires GE to provide public water to approximately 120 homes whose wells are impacted by groundwater contamination resulting from the GE Moreau site. These homes, as stated previously, are presently supplied by individual water wells which are treated, in some cases, by activated carbon filters.

Supplying an alternative source of drinking water to affected homes has been a complicated measure to complete because of the number of parties interested and affected by the outcome of this remedy.

In September, 1988, EPA sued GE and the Town of Moreau in United States District Court, Northern District of New York, to enforce its Record of Decision. EPA sought an order requiring the Town to permit access by GE and its contractors to property owned or controlled by the Town for the purpose of commencing construction of the water supply system to the affected homes. In October, 1988, the Court signed an order directing the Town to permit such access. Pipes for the water system are now in place along Town roads.

The State recently approved on September 15 a permit to supply water to these homes from the Village of South Glens Falls. In a Department press release dated September 15, the Department's view is that this water supply permit represents an interim remedial measure, and that this does not preclude consideration of other sources or solutions for supplying water to the impacted area in the future.

One remaining aspect of the remedial program for the GE Moreau Site which is still being deliberated is over the cleanup of the aquifer. In July, 1989, the State moved to intervene in the EPA vs. GE and the Town of Moreau lawsuit to challenge this aspect of the EPA remedial program. The state claims that EPA's proposal to allow the Moreau aquifer to cleanse itself by "natural" processes violates the Superfund law which requires EPA remedial programs to attain State water quality standards by means of active treatment, or to explain why this cannot be done.

EPA's proposed remedial measure is a passive one which relies on natural groundwater flow to flush contaminants from the groundwater. EPA has been unable to state when the aquifer will be restored to an appropriate level of quality. The state argues that without active measures to clean up the aquifer, an unreasonable amount of time will pass before the aquifer cleanses itself, thereby leaving a "dead" zone in the Town.

On September 15, Judge Cholakis ruled in favor of the state's right to intervene in the lawsuit. The Town of Moreau is also a party to the suit. The Judge's decision also stated that EPA's record of decision doesn't adequately address state groundwater standards. It appears that the Judge's ruling will be a precedent for the rest of the case making it likely that the record of decision will be modified.

Prepared: 9/89

Filed on EDOCS Yes No
 Site Name _____
 Site No. _____
 County _____
 Town _____
 Filed Yes No
 File Name _____
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File on eDOCs Yes _____ No _____

Site Name B Moreau _____

Site No. _____

County _____

Town _____

Foillable Yes _____ No _____

File Name Letter 1989-10-04, Fact sheet _____

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