



# FACT SHEET

## State Superfund Program

**Morse Industrial Corporation**  
**Operable Unit No. 3**  
**Site Number: 755010**  
**City of Ithaca, NY**

**June 2010**

### **Remedy Proposed for State Superfund Site; Public Comment Period and Public Meeting Announced**

The public is invited to comment on a remedy proposed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to address contamination related to the Morse Industrial Corporation Site, Operable Unit (OU) No. 3 ("site"). The site is located in the City of Ithaca, Tompkins County. See map for site location.

#### **The Proposed Remedy**

The remedy proposed for the site includes removal and replacement of approximately 300 feet of sanitary sewer line along East Spencer Street beginning at its intersection with Turner Place, along with continued operation of the previously installed vapor mitigation systems to mitigate soil vapor intrusion into the indoor air of homes and other structures in the area.

The proposed remedy is described in a draft cleanup plan called a "Proposed Remedial Action Plan" (PRAP) developed under New York's State Superfund Program. The document is available for public review at the locations identified below under "Where to Find Information." The document also is available on the NYSDEC web site at [www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8669.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8669.html) and at the Ithaca-South Hill Industrial Pollution (SHIP) web site at <http://ithaca-ship.org/>.

**Public Meeting**  
**Thursday June 17, 2010**  
**7:30 pm**

**Ithaca Town Hall**  
**215 North Tioga Street**  
**Ithaca, New York**

NYSDEC invites you to a public meeting to discuss the remedy proposed for the site. You are encouraged to provide comments at the meeting, and during the 30-day comment period described in this Fact Sheet.

**State Superfund Program:** New York's State Superfund Program (SSF) identifies and characterizes suspected inactive hazardous waste disposal sites. Sites that pose a significant threat to public health and the environment go through a process of investigation, evaluation, cleanup and monitoring.

NYSDEC generally attempts to identify parties responsible for site contamination and require cleanup before committing State funds.

For more information about the SSF, visit:  
[www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8439.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8439.html)

#### **How to Comment**

NYSDEC is accepting written comments about the proposed remedy for 30 days, from June 7 through July 9, 2010.

Submit written comments to:

Karen A. Cahill  
New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation  
Region 7  
615 Erie Boulevard West  
Syracuse, NY 13204-2400

## **Summary of the Proposed Remedy**

The proposed remedy represents the alternative supported by NYSDEC and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) to address site contamination. The draft cleanup plan has several goals:

- identify cleanup levels to be achieved;
- summarize other alternatives considered;
- explain why NYSDEC and NYSDOH believe the proposed remedy is protective of public health and the environment; and
- provide a detailed description of the proposed remedy.

The proposed remedy was chosen following a detailed investigation of the site and evaluation of alternatives to address contamination, called a “Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study.”

The primary elements of the proposed remedy include:

- Removal and replacement of approximately 300 feet of sanitary sewer line (and removal of associated overburden and bedding material, if present) along East Spencer Street beginning at its intersection with Turner Place;
- Installation of slotted or perforated pipe to passively vent soil vapor that re-enters the sewer trench and maintenance and monitoring of the system;
- Continued operation, maintenance, and monitoring of the previously installed vapor mitigation systems to mitigate the potential for soil vapor intrusion into the indoor air of homes and other structures in the area; and
- A provision for the evaluation of the potential for soil vapor intrusion into any buildings developed on the site, or for a significant change in use of existing buildings, or if a vacant building becomes occupied.

Under this proposed remedy, potential contact with site contamination would be reduced and/or eliminated by venting and mitigation of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) associated with soil vapor intrusion. The proposed remedy is protective of public health and the environment, provides reasonable long-term effectiveness, and allows compliance with environmental laws, regulations, and other standards and criteria to be monitored.

The estimated total cost to implement the remedy is \$1,143,200.

## **Next Steps**

NYSDEC will consider public comments as it finalizes the remedy for the site. The selected remedy will be described in a document called a “Record of Decision” that will explain why the remedy was selected and respond to public comments. This document will be made available to the public (see “Where to Find Information” below).

Following release of the Record of Decision, the project will then move into the remedial design and remedial action phase. The NYSDEC will keep the public informed during this process.

## **Background**

The Morse Industrial Corporation site occupies 100 acres along the west side of South Aurora Street/Danby Road (Route 96B) in the South Hill portion of the City of Ithaca, Tompkins County, New York (Figure 1). The plant consists of three main buildings flanked by a number of smaller buildings to the southwest and a series of access roads and parking lots that terrace the hillside above the plant to the east. The site is listed as a Class “2” site in the State Registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites (list of State Superfund sites). A Class 2 site represents a significant threat to public health or the environment; action is required.

Operable Unit (OU) No. 3, which is the subject of the PRAP, consists of the neighborhoods, sewer lines and residential structures to the north and west of the plant site. The residential neighborhood is bordered by Six Mile Creek to the west, which flows north along the base of South Hill and eventually empties into Cayuga Lake approximately two miles northwest of the plant site.

The original plant building was constructed in 1906 by Morse Industrial Corporation, which manufactured steel roller chain for the automobile industry. Up until the late 1970s, Borg-Warner used trichloroethene (TCE), a common solvent at the time, for cleaning and degreasing metal parts. TCE and other solvents containing VOCs appear to have been flushed into the plant’s sanitary sewer system and are believed to have leaked out from the sewer system through cracks and joints in the sewer lines in the vicinity of the residential neighborhood to the north and west of the plant.

In 1983, Morse Industrial Corporation was purchased from Borg-Warner by Emerson Electric Company, and in the late 1980s the facility became known as Emerson Power Transmission (EPT). EPT currently manufactures industrial roller chain, bearings, and clutching for the power transmission industry. Under Emerson’s ownership, TCE has not been used at the facility.

An interim remedial measure (IRM) was conducted at the site which consisted of the installation of soil vapor mitigation systems at several structures to address both current and potential indoor air contamination of volatile organic compounds associated with soil vapor intrusion. Some of the mitigation systems were installed on a voluntary basis by EPT.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

### **Where to Find Information**

Project documents are available at the following locations to help the public to stay informed. These documents include the PRAP.

NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation  
615 Erie Boulevard West  
Syracuse, NY 13204-2400  
Phone: (315) 426-7400  
Attention: Kim Wentworth  
Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30AM – 4:45PM

Tompkins County Public Library  
101 East Green Street  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
Phone: (607) 272-4557  
Hours: Mon-Thurs, 10AM – 8:15PM;  
Fri-Sat 10AM – 5 PM; Sun 1PM – 5PM

## **Who to Contact**

Comments and questions are always welcome and should be directed as follows:

### Project Related Questions

Karen A. Cahill  
New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation  
Region 7  
615 Erie Boulevard West  
Syracuse, New York 13204-2400  
(315) 426-7432  
kacahill@gw.dec.state.ny.us

### Project Related Health Questions

Susan B. Shearer  
New York State Department of Health  
Bureau of Environmental Exposure Investigation  
547 River Street  
Troy, New York 12180-2216  
(800) 458-1158, Ext. 27860  
bee@health.state.ny.us

**If you know someone who would like to be added to the site contact list, have them contact the NYSDEC project manager above. We encourage you to share this Fact Sheet with neighbors and tenants, and/or post it in a prominent area of your building for others to see.**



