



## **SAMPLING ACTIVITIES**

This summer, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, USACE, will sample soil at the Diaz Chemical Corporation Superfund site in Holley, Orleans County, New York to confirm that the system in place has removed contamination. EPA and USACE will restore the site after removing materials and equipment that the agencies used for the cleanup.

EPA and USACE are overseeing the operation of a system that uses high temperatures to destroy or remove contaminants to treat contaminated soil and groundwater through a network of 244 heating wells and 305 extraction wells. EPA and USACE monitor over 50 wells to make sure the cleanup is progressing effectively and safely.



*Heater wells*

## **THE TREATMENT SYSTEM**

The thermal treatment system uses heat to convert the contaminants in the soil and groundwater into vapors, which are captured through an extensive vacuum-based extraction system. The extraction wells capture and transport the vapors to a system that uses compression, cooling, condensation, and granular activated carbon (filters water and air by trapping contaminants) to treat the vapors. The system operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

From January to July 2018, EPA and USACE conducted a successful pilot of the thermal system. The agencies constructed a larger system to treat the rest of the contamination on the remaining 1.5-acres of the site property. In addition to constructing the larger system, EPA and USACE removed soil that had some residual contamination and disposed of the contaminated soil at a local landfill.

### **Health and Safety in the Community**

**Noise Reduction:** The equipment that heats the soil and captures the vapors generates a constant, but consistent source of noise. Noise levels are monitored daily at the Diaz property line and the noise produced at the site must not exceed 65 decibels during overnight hours, which is equivalent to the sound from a normal conversation. Limited exceedances of noise have occurred beyond the Diaz property line and EPA and USACE's contractor have installed noise absorbing blankets at select locations and have moved treatment equipment within buildings to reduce the noise.

**Odor Reduction:** Heating soil can also produce odors. Organic compounds become vapors as soil temperatures increase. Although all potentially harmful compounds are captured and treated, the treated vapors may still have an odor. The vapors released from the treatment system are tested for the presence of harmful compounds using air monitoring equipment placed around the perimeter of the Diaz property. Air monitoring is performed 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## BACKGROUND

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The Diaz Chemical Superfund site includes the five-acre former Diaz Chemical Corporation facility located at 40 Jackson Street in the Village of Holley, New York. Diaz Chemical manufactured specialty organic chemicals for the agricultural, pharmaceutical, photographic, color and dye, and personal care products industries. The facility released chemicals into the environment from 1975 to 2002.

A reactor vessel overheated in a process building in January 2002 causing its safety valve to rupture. Approximately 75 gallons of a chemical mixture were released through a roof stack vent. The release was a mixture of steam, toluene, and 2-chloro-6-fluorophenol, as well as related chemicals.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and EPA sampled indoor air, soil, interior surfaces, and household items in the affected neighborhood. The data indicated that there were no immediate or short-term threats to people's health. Diaz Chemical filed for bankruptcy and abandoned the facility in June 2003, leaving behind large volumes of chemicals in drums and tanks. EPA removed these chemicals and dismantled the Diaz Chemical production buildings between 2003 and 2007. EPA placed the site on the National Priorities List in July 2004.

With assistance from USACE, and under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act, EPA purchased eight houses and provided the owners with relocation assistance. In addition, EPA relocated two individual tenants to new rental locations.

EPA performed a study to determine the nature and extent of contamination, assess potential risks to people's health and the environment, and develop, screen and evaluate alternative treatment technologies. The study determined that site-related contamination does not exist in the surrounding residential area and, therefore, a neighborhood cleanup was not necessary.

EPA selected a cleanup plan for the site in September 2012 that included thermal treatment of the contaminated soil and groundwater at the Diaz Chemical property and natural processes to address the groundwater contamination downstream of the source areas. The cleanup plan also included demolishing the on-site building to allow access to contaminated soil and the installation of vapor mitigation systems installed in three homes between 2007 and 2009.

EPA transferred the eight properties to the Village of Holley Development Corporation, VHDC, in June 2017. Working with a local realtor and law firm, VHDC sold the houses in September 2017 and shared the proceeds with EPA. In 2022, EPA completed the first five-year view of the on-going work at the Diaz Chemical Superfund sites to ensure the existing cleanup approach remains protective of people's health and the environment and is operating as intended.

## Information Repositories

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EPA keeps site project information and reference materials for the public to read at local information repositories.

### **Community Free Library**

86 Public Square  
Holley, NY 14470  
(585) 638-6987

[www.epa.gov/superfund/diaz-chemical](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/diaz-chemical)

## EPA Contact Information

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