



FACT SHEET

Additional Investigation Activities to Begin Around The Leica Site in Town of Cheektowaga

May 2010

Site #915156

Introduction

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) would like to update you about ongoing environmental investigation activities at the Leica, Inc. (Leica) Site located on Eggert Road in the Town of Cheektowaga. Previous cleanup, or remedial, work at the site addressed most of the environmental contamination. However, impacted groundwater below the site still requires continued remediation. Investigation work in 2009 showed that contaminated groundwater was not releasing harmful vapors into nearby structures. However, monitoring wells installed at that time indicated that the location of slightly contaminated groundwater had changed. Accordingly, investigation activities will be performed in May 2010 to determine if the contamination is impacting the area surrounding the site.

Work at the site is being conducted by Leica under the supervision of the NYSDEC through New York State's Superfund Program. The Superfund program identifies, investigates and cleans up sites where consequential amounts of hazardous waste exist.



What Did the 2009 Investigation Indicate?

Leica conducted studies in 2009 at two homes closest to the facility to find out if any vapors were being released from contaminated groundwater. The results of this investigation were described in a "Vapor Intrusion Sampling Results" report issued in May 2009. In addition, Leica installed four monitoring wells at two locations along Rowan Road to determine the condition of groundwater. The "Groundwater Monitoring Results" report released in November 2009 detailed the findings. These investigations found that:

- None of the compounds detected in indoor air samples exceeded the NYSDOH Air Guidance Values;
- Local groundwater has not affected the sub-slab vapor or indoor air of the residences;
- Groundwater samples collected in 4 monitoring wells along Rowan Road had varying levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), depending on depth. In the shallow wells, VOCs were not detected above the standard. In the deeper wells, VOCs were detected above the standard.

What Will the Upcoming Investigation Involve?

Based on these results, Leica plans to install additional monitoring wells on Rowan Road and on Preston Road in May 2010. The new wells will be installed in order to further determine the condition of groundwater in these areas. Leica will install two wells at one location along Rowan Road and three wells at two locations along Preston Road.

Next Steps

A report detailing the results of the investigation is expected to be completed by fall of 2010. If results indicate that contaminants may be impacting public health and the environment, appropriate remedial actions will be developed. NYSDEC will keep the public notified about developments at the site through fact sheets similar to this one.

Site Background

The Leica manufacturing complex was built in 1938 by the Spencer Lens Company for the manufacture of scientific instruments and high quality optical devices. Since then, the property has been owned by various firms which also manufactured similar optical products. Leica acquired the facility in 1990 but ceased business operations at the site in 1993. Leica has, however, retained ownership of part of the land where contamination was identified. The majority of the site, including buildings and parking areas, has been utilized as warehouse and distribution facilities since 1993.

Previous environmental investigations at the site found contamination consisting of trichloroethylene (a common degreasing solvent), its related chlorinated compounds, and petroleum products. To address the impacted areas, Leica implemented a number of cleanup measures, including:

- Installing a Dual Vacuum Extraction/Pneumatic Fracturing/Air Injection system to remove groundwater within the shallow groundwater zone and treat the soil. Pneumatic fracturing involves injecting high-pressured air into the ground, creating cracks in the soil and maximizing the effectiveness of the vacuum extraction;
- Installing a deeper Groundwater Extraction and Treatment System to address contamination that penetrated bedrock. The system was designed to collect groundwater using recovery wells extending 45 feet below the surface and to prevent the movement of contaminants off the property;
- Excavating 9500 tons of contaminated soil at a portion of the site after previous remedial actions failed to achieve cleanup goals; and
- Implementing a long term monitoring program to ensure the effectiveness of the selected remedy.

While the majority of the contamination has been removed from the site, low levels of contaminants still exist within the groundwater below the site. This groundwater is located within overburden and the bedrock. The bedrock is about 16 feet below the ground surface. To address this remaining contamination, the Groundwater Extraction and Treatment System has been in operation since 2002. It will continue to operate until groundwater remedial goals are achieved or until it can be demonstrated that contaminant concentrations have been reduced to the point that the extraction system can no longer effectively remove residual contamination. The groundwater is tested quarterly from 19 monitoring wells.

In May 2008, Leica injected a solution known as Hydrogen Release Compound (HRC) in areas showing elevated levels of chlorinated compounds. HRC speeds up groundwater remediation by helping to break down the contaminants. Leica continues to monitor the effectiveness of the HRC injection.

Who Should I Call If I Have Questions About the Site?

Questions regarding the investigation of this site are welcome. Should you have any questions, please contact the following representatives:

Project-related Questions

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Environment-related Questions:

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Health-related Questions:

Mr. Cameron O'Connor
NYSDOH
584 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14202
(716) 847-4385
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Locations to View Project Documents

Two locations have been established as document repositories to provide you with access to project information. All documents relevant to the site's remedial program are available for review at the following locations:

Reinstein Memorial Branch Library
2580 Harlem Road
Cheektowaga, NY 14227
(716) 892-8089

NYSDEC Region 9 Office
270 Michigan Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14203
(716) 851-7220

Electronic versions of project documents are also available at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/52058.html>. Look for document links under the "Related Links" section in the right column.