

NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF



ENVIRONMENTAL
CONSERVATION

Dear Interested Citizen:

This Fact Sheet provides notification of an availability session for the Remedial Action Work Plan (RAWP) proposed for the BASF South 40 site in the City of Rensselaer. The availability session will be held on November 18th from 5:00pm to 7:30pm, at The Rensselaer County Community Center. Questions and concerns will be answered individually by the DEC and the DOH. The comment period which started on October 15th will now span 45 days, through December 1st. For more information, please contact:

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Project Manager
NYSDEC

1150 N. Westcott Road
Schenectady, NY 12306

(518) 357-2374

drlights@gw.dec.state.ny.us

For health related questions, please contact the following DOH representative:

Mr. Joseph Crua

Environmental Health Specialist
NYSDOH

547 River Street
Troy, NY 12180-2216

(518) 402-7860

or

1(800)458-1158, Ext. 27860

FACT SHEET

BASF South 40 Site

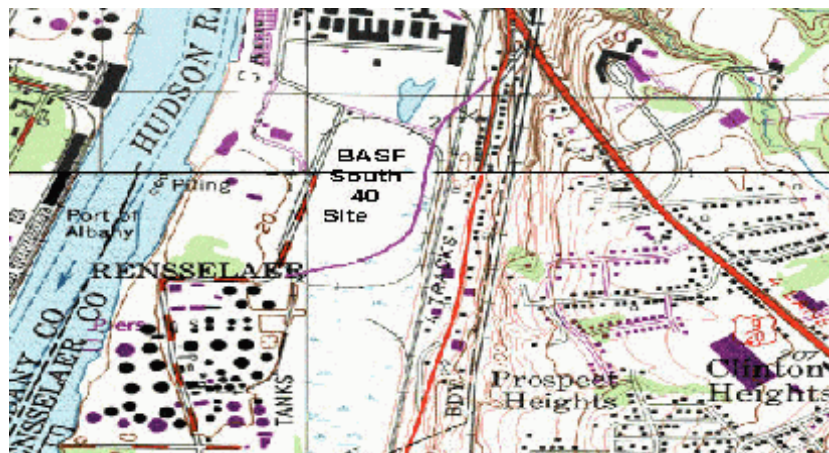
Site No. V00464-4
City of Rensselaer, Rensselaer County
November 2003

INTRODUCTION

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), in cooperation with the New York State Department of Health (DOH), is announcing an availability session to provide information and answer questions about the proposed Remedial Action Work Plan for the implementation of a remedial program at the BASF South 40 Site. The Site is located at 36 Riverside Avenue in the City of Rensselaer. DEC and DOH staff will address individual questions and concerns during the session. This cleanup is being conducted as part of a voluntary cleanup agreement between BASF and the DEC. The availability session will be located at the Rensselaer County Community Center (at 3rd and Washington), in room #5, on November 18th from 5:00pm to 7:30pm. The comment period which started on October 15, 2003 and was scheduled to end November 12, 2003, has been extended until December 1, 2003.

BACKGROUND

The site is approximately 40 acres in size (hence the name South 40) and was the former drum storage/disposal area for the previous owner of the parcel (the GAF Corp.) up until the mid-1970s. It is bounded by Riverside Avenue to the west, by Conrail railroad tracks to the east, by the BASF manufacturing plant to the north, and by an abandoned railroad bed to the south. Since the Port Access Highway was built, a small portion of the site is located south of the highway. There are no residential properties adjacent to the site. The site was (and currently is) listed as a Class 3 site in the NYS Registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Sites when a voluntary cleanup agreement was signed in November 2001. A Class 3 site has contamination present, but available data indicate that the site does not pose a significant threat to public health or the environment. Environmental investigations performed between 1986 and 2002 defined the extent of the on-site contaminants. The soil was tested for PCBs in 1988, but no detectable levels were found.



REMEDIAL INVESTIGATIONS

An Order on Consent between the DEC and BASF led to a 1986 investigation, which found areas of possible environmental contamination because they contained the remnants of metal drums and stained soils. To further assess the contamination, supplemental investigations were undertaken by BASF in 1990, 1991, 2000 and 2002. The investigations found significant magnetic anomalies in the central portion of the site where drum remnants were exposed at the surface. Arsenic, chromium, lead, and zinc were detected in the soil samples, but arsenic is considered the primary metal of concern due to the frequency of detection and concentration. Sampling of the groundwater from permanent monitoring wells along the perimeter of the site did not detect arsenic above water quality standards. Therefore, on-site metals are not impacting off-site areas. The nine acre portion south of the Port Access Highway was found to contain slight contamination, but is not migrating off-site.

PROPOSED REMEDIAL ACTIVITIES

The Remedial Action Work Plan (RAWP) outlines the proposed remedial activities designed to eliminate any potential exposures. The DEC does not suspect any off-site migration, impacts, or potential for off-site exposures. The following activities would be implemented:

- Soil excavation would target elevated levels of arsenic contaminated soil and assumes that removing the contaminant of concern (arsenic) in the mounded area and two hot spots (outside the mounded area) will remove any significant pockets of the other metals and semi-volatile organic compounds because of the frequency of detection and concentration.
- Post excavation sampling results would be used to confirm that the soil excavation is complete.
- The drum removal task would locate the drum remnants with an electro-magnetic survey, excavate all accessible remnants and associated contaminated soil, and send them to an appropriate off-site facility.
- All areas of excavation will be backfilled with at least one foot of clean fill material, and seeded to generate a vegetative cover. An orange geo-membrane would be placed in all areas of excavation as a marker (demarcation layer) to separate the clean fill material from original material.

DOCUMENT REPOSITORIES

Public understanding and involvement are important to the success of New York's Voluntary Cleanup Program. As the project progresses, the DEC will distribute fact sheets, like this one, to keep you informed. In addition, the DEC has also placed site documents in a document repository.

The DEC has established a document repository for the BASF South 40 Site at:

Rensselaer Public Library
810 Broadway (old National Bank)
Rensselaer, NY (518) 462-1193
M-F: 10:00am to 5:00pm, then 6:00pm to 9:00pm **on M-W ONLY**
Saturday: 9:00 to 12 noon

ABOUT THE VOLUNTARY CLEANUP PROGRAM

New York established its Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) to address the environmental, legal, and financial barriers that often hinder the redevelopment and reuse of contaminated properties. The VCP was developed to enhance private sector cleanups and to reduce the development pressures on "green field" sites. Under the program, a volunteer agrees to investigate and remediate a site to a level which is protective of public health and the environment for the present or intended use of the property. Investigation and remediation is carried out under the oversight of NYSDEC and NYSDOH. When the volunteer completes the work, the State provides a release from certain State liability for site contaminants.