

Inactive Hazardous Site Branch
CTS of Asheville Summary
(NCD003149556/Former APS# 20358)
Mills Gap Rd, Buncombe County

Background:

This site involves soil and groundwater contamination by chlorinated solvents (Trichloroethylene-TCE and its degradation by-products), petroleum, and some metals. In addition to soil and groundwater contamination known to exist in the immediate vicinity of the former plant operations area, contaminants have also been found in springs/surface waters immediately adjacent to the site and in residential supply wells. Contaminated residential supply wells have been provided connections to municipal water.

The state of North Carolina and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) have been working closely together to address this site since environmental concerns were identified in 1985. Two programs within the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Division of Waste Management (Superfund Section) have been involved with this site. These programs are the Site Evaluation and Removal Branch (SERB), and the Inactive Hazardous Sites Branch (IHSB). The SERB primarily works with the USEPA to evaluate sites for direct Federal regulatory actions and for mitigation of immediate health and safety remediation actions. The SERB and the USEPA have performed four evaluation studies to determine if the site would qualify for listing with the USEPA's National Priorities List (NPL). To date, the site has not scored sufficiently high enough for listing on the NPL. However, evaluations are continuing in support of this listing effort as new data is collected.

The USEPA and SERB have also made efforts to determine if there are any immediate threats to public health and implement limited remediation measures to mitigate those threats. These actions include: on-going soil vapor extraction in the most highly concentrated soil contamination areas at the former plant, study and mitigation of spring/surface water impacts (ozone injection is currently being proposed), study of vapor intrusion and related health evaluation studies in the residential areas immediately surrounding the site, ongoing sampling of surrounding residential supply wells, and limiting access to the impacted springs/surface waters.

The state's IHSB oversees complete assessment and remedial actions at hazardous substance contamination sites that do not score high enough for direct USEPA involvement. The IHSB program derives its regulatory authority from the state's Inactive Hazardous Sites Response Act of 1987 (NC General Statute 130A-310 et seq). The IHSB is first required to request voluntary cooperation from a responsible party. If a responsible party refuses to "volunteer", the IHSB can issue an Administrative Order compelling the required assessment and remediation activities. More information about the IHSB can be found at: <http://www.wastenotnc.org/sfhome/ihsbrnch.htm>

On November 27, 2007, the IHSB sent CTS a letter requesting that they voluntarily conduct a site assessment. The site assessment's purpose is to identify the extent of all impacted media related to the site, so that an appropriate remediation plan addressing those impacts can then be developed by the responsible party. CTS voluntarily agreed to conduct the assessment and has been working with the IHSB to conduct the required assessment activities. The complete assessment and remediation activities being addressed by the IHSB with CTS are complementary, and are done in addition to the immediate mitigation efforts currently being performed with the USEPA.

There are different phases of investigation performed during a complete site assessment under the ISHB regulations and guidelines. The number of assessment phases that are needed is dependent upon the extensiveness of the contaminated media as they are discovered and characterized. Copies of documents related to the IHSB-directed CTS site assessment activities are kept in the City of Asheville's PACK Memorial Library at 67 Haywood Street, Asheville, NC 28801. Laura Gaskin is the Library's contact person for viewing documents at that location. Digital scans of the ISHB files listed below are being provided with this summary. In addition to the updates made to the document repository at the City of Asheville's PACK Memorial Library, documents related to the IHSB's and CTS's activities with this site will be made on a monthly basis to Congressman Shuler's office.

When the assessment is complete, regulations require that the responsible party enter into an administrative agreement with the IHSB to develop a remediation plan. Although assessment activities are still underway at the site, the IHSB and CTS are currently working toward signing an administrative agreement. As required by the regulations, the finalized draft administrative agreement and the subsequently proposed remediation plan will be made available for public comment.

IHSB-CTS Site, Order of Documents:

NCDENR to CTS Site Assessment Request Ltr 11-27-07 signed
Jones Day-Michael Dolan CTS to DENR Will Volunteer Ltr 12-20-07
NCDENR CTS Press Release 1-29-08
CTS to NCDENR Phase I Workplan 2-28-08
NCDENR to CTS Phase I Plan Comments Ltr 3-31-08
CTS to NCDENR Phase I Workplan Addendum 5-6-08
NCDENR CTS Media Advisory 7-15-08
NCDENR to CTS Phase I Workplan Approval 7-24-08
NCDENR to CTS Reminder Ltr 7-28-08
NCDENR to CTS Email Confirm Contractor 8-15-08
Congressman Heath Shuler Summoning Ltr 9-19-08
Shuler Congressional Hearing Notice 12-1-08
CTS Phase I B Site Assessment Work Plan 12-2-08 – Phase I A Data
NCDENR to CTS Phase I B Work Plan Response Ltr 1-6-09

January 2009 Update:

- The IHSB continues to negotiate an Agreement for site cleanup with CTS.
- The IHSB received the results from Phase IA of the site assessment from CTS on December 5, 2008.
- A letter advising CTS to proceed with the Phase IB work phase was issued on January 6, 2009.