

(5) If adverse comments are received within the 30-day public comment period on this notice to delete also published in today's **Federal Register**, EPA will publish a timely withdrawal of this direct final deletion before its effective date and will prepare a response to comments and continue with the deletion process on the basis of the notice of intent to delete and the comments already received.

Deletion of a Site from the NPL does not itself create, alter, or revoke any individual's rights or obligations. Deletion of a site from the NPL does not in any way alter EPA's right to take enforcement actions, as appropriate. The NPL is designed primarily for informational purposes and to assist EPA management. Section 300.425(e)(3) of the NCP states that the deletion of a site from the NPL does not preclude eligibility for future response actions, should future conditions warrant such actions.

#### IV. Basis for Site Deletion

The following information provides EPA's rationale for deleting the Site from the NPL:

##### A. Site Location

The Site is located about one half mile west of the town of West Elizabeth in Jefferson Borough, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania and comprises approximately 26 acres. The Site contains a 2-acre landfill which is located in the head of a narrow valley on the site of a former coal mine. The Site overlies a bedrock aquifer, and is also in contact with the Pittsburgh Coal formation, a source of non-potable ground water.

##### B. Site History

Between 1950 to 1964, the Pennsylvania Industrial Chemical Corporation (PICCO) deposited approximately 85,000 tons of process wastes consisting of petroleum and coal derived chemicals mixed with clay in the onsite landfill. Prior to 1950, the area on which the landfill came to be located had been used for coal strip and deep mining operations. At the location of the landfill, PICCO deposited approximately 20 feet of waste in place of the mined coal.

PICCO deposited the waste into the landfill as a slurry which collected behind an earthen dike constructed across the upper end of the strip-mined valley. Precipitation runoff from the surrounding hillsides along with any free water from the waste materials collected within the active landfill behind the dike. After PICCO stopped depositing waste in the landfill, it

placed a poorly graded, native clay soil cover, ranging in thickness from four to ten feet, over the surface of the landfill. As a result, the direct precipitation and run off from the surrounding hills ponded at times on the landfill cover. Some of the water infiltrated the cover, recharging the waste material and adjacent ground water system. The remainder of the water evaporated or ran off to an unnamed stream. Over time residual product oils decanted from the waste materials as free product. The free product and infiltrated water migrated southeast through the landfill dike into downslope soils and also southwest into mine voids in the adjacent Pittsburgh Coal Formation.

In 1972, Hercules, Incorporated purchased the Site. Between 1980 and 1984, Hercules conducted field investigations of the ground water conditions in the coal formation, deep bedrock, and the extent of contaminated soils downslope of the landfill. Those investigations revealed that there were contaminants in ground water in the Pittsburgh Coal Formation and in downslope soils and perched ground water. In 1983, as a result of those investigations, Hercules installed a leachate collection trench below the lower landfill dike to collect leachate and ground water. The trench is still operating. Liquids collected in the trench are directed to an oil/water separator. The oil is collected and is burned at the Hercules Jefferson Plant boiler. The water is discharged to the Jefferson Borough Sanitary Sewer System and, then, to the West Elizabeth sewage treatment plant.

EPA completed a Superfund Site Investigation in April 1982. The Site received a Hazard Ranking System score of 37.69 in December 1982, was proposed for the National Priorities List (NPL) in December 1982 and was placed on the NPL in September 1983.

##### Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study

In November 1987, Hercules entered into a Consent Order and Agreement with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources (PADER), the name of which was subsequently changed to PADEP, to conduct a Remedial Investigation (RI)/Feasibility Study (FS) (collectively, RI/FS) in order to characterize the Site for potential remediation. In March 1988, Hercules began work under an EPA-approved RI, which included conducting an extensive study of the extent of contamination of the soils, ground water, and surface water associated with the landfill. Hercules submitted a final RI Report which provided a detailed

analysis of no action, containment, and treatment options to PADER and EPA in March 1991, and submitted the final FS to PADER and EPA in May 1991.

##### Characterization of Risk

The primary contaminants of concern affecting soil, debris, and ground water at the Site are volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including benzene, toluene, and xylenes and other organics including naphthalene, poly-aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and phenols. Federal Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) for drinking water established pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 300f *et seq.*, were exceeded for benzene, benzo (a) pyrene, ethylbenzene, 2-methylnaphthalene, 4-methylphenol, naphthalene, toluene, and xylene. The exposure route which made the greatest contribution to the trespasser scenario was the inhalation of Ethylbenzene and 4-methyl-2-pentanone (VOC) vapors. The VOCs, naphthalene, PAHs and phenols are "hazardous substances" as defined in section 101(14) of CERCLA.

After reviewing the results of the original RI/FS, EPA categorized the Site into two operable units. Operable Unit One (OU-1) addresses remediation of the landfill, the adjacent contaminated soils, non-aqueous floating product present in the subsurface mine voids of the Pittsburgh Coal Formation, and monitoring of onsite ground water. Operable Unit Two (OU-2) addresses offsite ground water, seeps and residential wells.

##### Record of Decision Findings for OU-1

A June 28, 1991 Record of Decision (ROD) documented the selected remedial action for OU-1 which included: installation of a multi-layer cap; reinforcement and upgrading of the lower landfill dike to increase its stability; installation of an upgraded oil/water separator downslope of the leachate collection system, with discharge of aqueous phases to a publicly owned treatment works; relocation of a sanitary sewer; implementation of institutional controls which include deed restrictions to alert prospective buyers to the presence of hazardous substances onsite and to prohibit future development; construction of a fence around the perimeter of the Site property to prevent unauthorized access; offsite reclamation of non-aqueous phase liquids (NAPLS) through skimmer wells for use as an energy source; and implementation of a Site maintenance and long-term ground water monitoring program.