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Settlement: EPA Issues AOC to Implement Final Remedy at Occidental Chemical Company Facility in West Virginia

Occidental Chemical Company Agreement Resources

Administrative Order on Consent <<https://epa.gov/enforcement/settlement-aoc-occidental-chemical-facility-cleanup-agreement>>

On September 26, 2013, EPA issued an administrative order on consent (AOC) under section 3008(h) of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) to Occidental Chemical Company (OxyChem) to implement the final remedy at its facility in Belle, W.Va.

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Information about Occidental Chemical Company

Occidental Chemical Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Occidental Petroleum, is a chemical manufacturer with interests in basic chemicals, vinyls and performance chemicals.

Information about the Occidental Chemical Company Facility

The former OxyChem facility is located in Belle, West Virginia, approximately 15 miles southeast of Charleston, W.Va, on a 23-acre site adjacent to the Kanawha River. The Belle facility is located in a mixed industrial/residential area, which includes the DuPont Belle plant located adjacent to the site. Chemical production began at the site in 1920 by Belle Alkali Company and continued through a succession of owners and tenants until OxyChem purchased the facility in 1986. Oxychem manufactured multi-product chloromethanes from chlorine until the plant shut down in 1994. All process equipment and buildings have been taken down and removed from the site.

Pollutants and Environmental Effects

Volatile organic compounds are the main constituents found in the site's soil and groundwater. These compounds primarily consist of methylene chloride, chloroform and carbon tetrachloride. Semi-volatile compounds and metals were also detected.

Summary of the Administrative Order on Consent

EPA Region 3 issued the AOC to implement the final remedy for the OxyChem site in Belle, WV. after it determined that it is technically impracticable (TI) for the facility to attain groundwater protection standards throughout the groundwater plume due to the hydrogeologic characteristics of the subsurface groundwater and other environmental factors. Because contaminants remain in the soil and groundwater at the facility and adjacent property above levels appropriate for residential use, the final remedy requires the following:

- land and groundwater use restrictions,
- maintenance of a sheet pile wall surrounding Area 7 at the facility,
- maintenance of TreeWells and a geosynthetic cap,
- groundwater monitoring, and
- maintenance of a site-wide vegetative cover.

EPA Region 3 expedited the remedy selection and implementation process by negotiating the AOC during the 30-day public notice period for the proposed remedy. Since no comments were received during the public notice period, EPA Region 3 determined the proposed remedy would be the final remedy a few days after the comment period ended and issued the AOC two days after making that determination.

Contact Information

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