

NPL Site Narrative for Chem-Solv, Inc.

CHEM-SOLV, INC. Cheswold, Delaware

Conditions at proposal (January 22, 1987): Chem-Solv, Inc., started a small solvent distillation facility in 1982 on 1.5 acres in Cheswold, Kent County, Delaware. The company recycled waste solvents by placing a drum on an electric coil heater, which distilled the solvents into a second drum. The contents of the second drum were filtered into a third drum, which was returned to the customer. The residues remaining after distillation were classified as hazardous waste under Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and were stored on-site.

On September 7, 1984, an explosion and fire destroyed the distillation facility. At the time, witnesses observed fluids flowing off a concrete pad into the soil. On September 21, 1984 and January 31, 1985, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DDNREC) ordered the company under State law to cease operations immediately, monitor ground water, and remove all contaminated soil. The company took no action.

DDNREC conducted studies to characterize the upper Columbia Aquifer adjacent to the site. DDNREC detected high concentrations of organic chemicals, including trichloroethylene, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, and 1,1-dichloroethane, in on-site soils and ground water on- and off-site. Both upper and lower zones of the Columbia Aquifer are contaminated. About 5,500 residents are served by private wells within 3 miles of the site.

In September 1985, DDNREC excavated contaminated soil and began using a process that passes air through the soil to remove volatile organic compounds. The air-stripping process reduced contamination to levels that permitted returning the soil to the excavated area. In December 1985, DDNREC started to recover and treat the volatile organics in the upper Columbia Aquifer.

DDNREC has filed suit against Chem-Solv to recover the money it has spent. The company has declared itself financially insolvent.

When Chem-Solv started operations, it filed Part A of a RCRA permit application, giving the company Interim Status under Subtitle C as a storage facility. In August 1985, DDNREC made a final decision to deny the storage permit.

Because Chem-Solv, Inc., has lost Interim Status (and hence authorization to operate) and there are additional indications that the owner or operator will be unwilling to undertake corrective action, the company meets a component of EPA's NPL/RCRA policy.

Status (June 24, 1988): After this site was proposed, procedural issues arose and new technical information became available. Hence, EPA is reproposing the site to allow an additional 60-day comment period.

Status (August 30, 1990): In September 1988, EPA and 21 parties potentially responsible for wastes associated with the site signed an Administrative Order on Consent under CERCLA Section 106(a).

The order called for a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) to determine the type and extent of contamination at the site and identify alternatives for remedial action. A draft RI report was due in July 1990.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.