

# NPL Site Narrative for North Penn - Area 1

## NORTH PENN - AREA 1 Souderton, Pennsylvania

**Conditions at proposal (January 22, 1987):** The North Penn-Area 1 Site is in Souderton, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. The site was originally proposed under the name "Gentle Cleaners, Inc./Granite Knitting Mills, Inc."

The site has been renamed because the contamination may be caused by sources in addition to those identified in the original name. This is one of several NPL sites involving North Penn Water Authority (NPWA) wells that supply drinking water to most of the people living northwest of Philadelphia. Six additional areas with contaminated ground water are under investigation.

Gentle Cleaners, Inc., has operated in Souderton since 1953. It used perchloroethylene (PCE or tetrachloroethylene) during 1953-83, changing to a combination of PCE and 1,1,1-trichloroethane (1,1,1-TCEA) in 1983. Next door to Gentle Cleaners is Granite Knitting Mills, Inc., a hosiery mill that has operated for over 50 years. This facility used PCE for many years as part of its dry cleaning operations.

NPWA discovered PCE in one of its wells in the area in 1979. The well has been taken out of service. EPA tests conducted in August 1986 identified Gentle Cleaners, Inc., and Granite Knitting Mills, Inc., as sources of 1,1,1-TCEA in a private well 200 feet south of the site. An estimated 74,700 people obtain drinking water from public and private wells within 3 miles of the site. There is no other source of drinking water.

The site is 800 feet northwest of Skippack Creek, which is used for recreational activities.

**Status (March 31, 1989):** EPA is developing a workplan for a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) to determine the type and extent of contamination in the area and identify alternatives for remedial action. As a detailed workplan is developed, the sources responsible for the contamination will be given an opportunity to conduct the RI/FS.

EPA is evaluating additional sources of contamination.

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/toxfaq/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.