

# NPL Site Narrative for Perham Arsenic Site

## PERHAM ARSENIC SITE Perham, Minnesota

**Conditions at listing (September 1983):** The Perham Arsenic Site is a small burial area covering about 0.25 acre in Perham, Minnesota. It was discovered in 1972 when employees from a land construction company were poisoned by arsenic in the company's well. The State did extensive sampling of soil and ground water, which helped to define the boundaries of the site and to establish the extent and magnitude of ground water contamination. The source of the contamination is apparently the remains of a program in the 1930s and 1940s to control grasshopper infestations. There are probably 25 sites in Minnesota where arsenic-containing materials are buried and another 50 to 100 where they are stored aboveground. The arsenic issue remained dormant, except for monitoring of wells, until the late 1970s. Public concern with hazardous waste renewed efforts by the State to resolve the issue. The State has concluded that the arsenic and contaminated soil must be excavated to solve the ground water problem.

In May 1982, the City capped the site with a plastic film and soil to limit infiltration of rain and snow into the wastes.

**Status (June 1984):** A remedial investigation to determine the type and extent of contamination at the site has been completed. A feasibility study to identify alternatives for remedial action is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 1984.

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.