

NPL Site Narrative for Sylvester

SYLVESTER

Nashua, New Hampshire

Conditions at listing (October 1981): The Sylvester (Gilson Road) Site covers 20 acres in a residential area of Nashua, New Hampshire. During the 1970s, a 6-acre former sand/gravel pit became a dump for household refuse, demolition materials, chemical sludges, and hazardous liquids. High concentrations of heavy metals and organic chemicals contaminate the underlying ground water, which formed a plume that moved rapidly toward Lyle Reed Brook. The brook is a tributary of the Nashua River, which is a source of drinking water.

The dumping at the site was first discovered in late 1970. After several court appearances and court actions, an injunction was issued in 1976 to remove all material from the site. However, operations continued, and in November 1978, State personnel observed drums being sorted at the site. A court order was issued in October 1979 prohibiting all further disposal of hazardous wastes on the site.

Between June 1980 and June 1982, EPA, first under Section 311 of the Clean Water Act and later under CERCLA, installed a system to temporarily pump and recirculate contaminated ground water, thus preventing it from reaching Lyle Reed Brook, preventing further contamination of the aquifer, and controlling air pollution by volatile chemicals. The total cost was \$925,000. In 1980, the city and the State also contributed to fencing of site, removal of 1,300 drums, and installation of alternate water supply lines.

In August 1981, EPA awarded a \$2,305,600 Cooperative Agreement to New Hampshire for (1) design and construction of a slurry wall and cap to permanently contain contaminated ground water on-site, (2) a feasibility study to evaluate alternatives for treating contaminated ground water, (3) design of the cost-effective treatment system, and (4) extension of a municipal water system to serve residents whose wells would become contaminated within 12 months.

This is the top priority site in New Hampshire.

Status (July 1983): In June 1982, EPA amended the Cooperative Agreement to award an additional \$2,064,940 to (1) construct a larger (20-acre) slurry wall than originally planned (completed in December 1982) and (2) conduct pilot studies to develop design specifications for the ground water treatment system. The pilot studies were completed in the second quarter of 1983. The Cooperative Agreement will be amended to provide funds for construction of the treatment system, which is expected to operate for 2 years.

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.