

NPL Site Narrative for Higgins Farm

HIGGINS FARM

Franklin Township, New Jersey

Conditions at proposal (June 24, 1988): Higgins Farm covers 74.5 acres on Route 518 in Franklin Township, a rural area of Somerset County, New Jersey. The property, now used to raise cattle, belongs to the owner of the Higgins Disposal Site, which is also proposed for the NPL at this time.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) initially investigated the farm in December 1985 after the Franklin Township Health Department detected elevated levels of chlorobenzene in a nearby private well. The investigation revealed a buried drum dump on the farm approximately 40 yards from the contaminated well. A partially exposed drum was found to contain chlordane, naphthalene, and arsenic. In April 1986, the farm owner excavated 50 drums, pumped liquids into holding tanks, and placed visibly contaminated soils into containers.

In March 1987, EPA initiated the first phase of a CERCLA emergency action at the site, which involved providing bottled water to 29 residents along Route 518. The second phase started in April 1987 and involved stabilizing the drum burial area. EPA fenced the area; installed a clay berm around the site to contain run-off; constructed a pole barn to house four roll-off containers of contaminated material; pumped contaminated liquid from the pit excavated in 1986 to holding tanks; and lined and backfilled the pit.

Soils from the excavation pit contain semivolatile organic compounds and pesticides, including bis(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate, pentachlorophenol, dieldrin, endrin, and dioxins, as well as arsenic. An estimated 3,300 people rely on private wells within 3 miles of the site as their only source of drinking water.

The nearest downslope surface water is Carter Brook 2,000 feet to the east. It is used for recreational activities.

Status (March 31, 1988): EPA is considering various alternatives for the site.

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.