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Community Relations Plan
for
ArChem/Thames Chelsea Site

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DECEMBER 2001

ArChem/Thames Chelsea State Superfund Site Houston, Texas

Community Relations Plan

DECEMBER 15, 2001

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COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

for

Proposed State Superfund Site
ArChem/Thames Chelsea
Harris County, Texas
December 2001

Remediation Division
Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission
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www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/permitting/remed/superfund/index.html

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

for

Proposed State Superfund Site
ArChem/Thames Chelsea
December 2001

Inquires relating to the ArChem/Thames Chelsea site should be directed to:

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Appendices

- I. Texas Register public notice regarding proposal of the ArChem/Thames Chelsea site to the State Superfund Registry and appropriate land use designation. Published May 4, 2001.
- II Houston Chronicle public notice regarding proposal of the ArChem/Thames Chelsea site to the State Superfund Registry and appropriate land use designation. Published May 4, 2001.
- II Site Location Maps
Site Facility Map
Harris County Superfund Map

Community Relations Plan
for
Proposed State Superfund Site
ArChem/Thames Chelsea
Harris County, Texas
December 2001

Overview of Community Relations Plan

This community relations plan (CRP) identifies issues of community concern regarding the proposed ArChem/Thames Chelsea state Superfund (ArChem) site in Houston, Harris County, Texas. It also outlines the anticipated community relations activities to be conducted during each phase of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study for the ArChem site.

The ArChem site community relations plan has been prepared to aid the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) in developing a community relations program tailored to the needs of the community affected by the ArChem site.

This plan is based primarily on the information from the TNRCC Hazard Ranking System package prepared for the site.

Site Profile

Site Location and Description

Latitude 29E36' 46" N

Longitude 95E11' 55" W

Media Affected: Soil

Contaminants: Toluene, Isophorone, Antimony triacetate, Bis (2 ethylhexyl) phthalate, Furfural aldehyde, Barium, Chromium, 1,1,2,2-tetrachloroethane

The ArChem site is located at 13103 Conklin Lane and Beltway 8, which is approximately a half mile northwest of the intersection of State Highway 3 and Interstate Highway 45 in Southeast Houston, Harris County, Texas.

Background

The 10-acre site was formerly a specialty chemical manufacturing facility. The site has been inactive and abandoned since 1991. Removal actions by the TNRCC; its predecessor agency, the Texas Water Commission; and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), were performed between September 1992 and August 1996, and included removing from the site: all drums of liquid/sludge and/or solid chemical wastes; all surface reactor or storage vessels containing residual chemical wastes; various size process piping containing residual chemical process wastes; and all chemical waste-contaminated water and sludge from an on-site liquid separator.

Site Chronology

(Note: The state agency referred to in this chronology as the Texas Water Commission (TWC) is now known as the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). The new agency, TNRCC, became effective September 1, 1993, as mandated under State Senate Bill 2 of the 73rd regular Legislative Session.)

The TNRCC's knowledge of the early operations history of the ArChem site is incomplete at this time. The four (4) tracts of land (Tracts 2,4,7, and 8) that comprise the site today were owned by different companies throughout the property's history.

June 21, 1990	ArChem Company files bankruptcy.
October 1990	Thames Chelsea Chemical USA becomes operator at the site through a lease purchase agreement approved by the Bankruptcy Court.
January 1991	Thames Chelsea Chemical USA ceases operations at the site.
April 1991	Site is abandoned.
October 31, 1991	TWC sends letters to potentially responsible parties (PRPs) requesting information on the site and allowing PRPs the opportunity to conduct a preliminary investigation, immediate removal, or cleanup.
April-September 1992	TWC does removal to temporarily stabilize the site until completion of purchase through Bankruptcy Court.
August 1992	TWC responds to a release of aluminum chloride.
April 1993	TWC performs removal action at the site to dispose of wastewater, and hazardous waste, and to repack drums on the site.

April to August 1993	PRPs perform limited response actions at the site.
August 1993	TNRCC sends letters to PRPs informing them that \$520,326 has been spent thus far and requesting information on the site.
August 17, 1993	Harzardous Ranking System (HRS) score is completed. The site scores 39.79 based on groundwater pathway.
May 28, 1994	Vapor cloud is reported leaving the site which was caused by aluminum chloride stored on the site. EPA conducts assessment and air monitoring and cleans up spilled material.
December 2, 1994	TNRCC sends letters to PRPs informing them that \$721,673 has been spent thus far and offering them the opportunity to conduct a removal action.
March 29, 1995	The balance of the Texas Spill Response Fund prevents TNRCC from conducting any removal work at the site. TNRCC sends letter to EPA requesting for an EPA- lead emergency response to address the immediate threats posed by the site.
April 20, 1995	TNRCC contractor completes initial PRP search.
1995 through 1996	EPA conducts removal of drums and process and storage vessels on the site.
February 1997	EPA contractor issues a report summarizing the removal action.
August 13, 1999	Letter from EPA to TNRCC designates the site as “No Further Response Action Planned” by EPA and refers the site to the State for any further action, as necessary.
April 15, 2001	TNRCC sends letters to PRPs informing them of TNRCC’s intent to propose the site to the State Superfund registry and to propose commercial/industrial land use designation. Letters also included information regarding June 12, 2001 public meeting and offered PRPs the opportunity to fund or conduct remedial investigation and feasibility study.

- May 4, 2001 TNRCC publishes legal notice in the *Houston Chronicle* and *Texas Register* (26 TexReg 3413) proposing the site to the state Superfund registry, and also proposing industrial land use specifications for remediating the site contamination.
- May 5, 2001 TNRCC sends letters to additional PRPs informing them of TNRCC's intent to propose the site to the state Superfund registry and to propose an industrial land use designation. Letters also included information regarding June 12, 2001 meeting and offered PRPs the opportunity to fund or conduct remedial investigations and feasibility study.
- June 12, 2001 TNRCC conducts a public meeting to receive citizens' comments at Dobie High School, 11111 Beamer Road, Houston, Texas.

Community Profile

The ArChem site is located at 13103 Conklin Lane, Houston, Harris County, Texas. The City of Houston is governed by a mayor and a 14-member council. The city is divided into nine council districts, each represented by a specific council member. The five other members of the council are elected on an at-large basis. The ArChem site is within District E, the specific area served by Councilman Rob Todd. At the county level, the site is in Harris County Precinct #2 served by County Commissioner Jim Fonteno. At the state level, the site is within the boundary of House District #147 served by Representative Garnet Coleman. In the state Senate, it is in District #11, served by Senator Mike Jackson.

The U.S. Census estimates the 2000 population for this Census Tract, Number 3211, at 3,645 with race as follows:

Race*	Percent
White	68.9
Black or African American	10.0
American Indian & Alaska Native	0.4
Asian	2.9
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	0.0
Some other race	17.8

*Hispanic or Latino may be of any race, percent is 31.4.

There are approximately 1,648 occupied housing units, with 65.9% being renter-occupied. Approximately 63% of the householders are between the ages of 15 to 44 years of age.

Harris County has other state and federal Superfund sites (see Harris County map in Appendices). The closest Superfund sites are Brio Refining and Dixie Oil Processors, approximately four miles away.

Community Involvement

A public meeting was held on Tuesday, June 12, 2001, 7:00 p.m. at Dobie High School, 11111 Beamer Road, in Houston, Texas. The meeting was held to take public comment on the proposal of the site to the state Superfund registry and to propose a non-residential land use designation. Legal notices were published in the May 4, 2001 editions of the *Texas Register* and the *Houston Chronicle*.

Fifteen citizens signed the attendance register at the meeting. Concerns and questions expressed at the meeting included:

- (1) What is the proximity of water wells to the site?
- (2) Is the TNRCC aware of the close proximity of an elementary school to the site?
- (3) Where were the drums on the site disposed?
- (4) Why were some drums left on the site and not disposed?
- (5) Is the depth of monitor wells adequate?

Specific Objectives of the Community Relations Program

1. Maintain open communications between the TNRCC, city, county and state officials, and area residents.
2. Continue to expand the mailing list, as necessary, to include additional agencies, organizations and residents that are interested in the project.
3. Provide a community relations contact from whom interested parties can receive information on site activities, project status, and study results.
4. Provide citizens, involved agencies, elected officials, and the media with accurate, timely information about site-related activities by issuing press releases and holding community meetings.
5. Attend public meetings. Respond to telephone inquiries and written correspondence.
6. Provide all information, especially technical findings, in language that is understandable to the general public and in a form useful to interested citizens and elected officials. This will be done through the preparation of fact sheets and news releases when major findings are made available during project phases.
7. Monitor community concerns and information requirements as the project progresses.
8. Modify the Community Relations Plan to address changes in community needs and to maintain accuracy during different project phases.

Community Relations Techniques

1. Project status briefing for state and local officials - to periodically inform state and local officials of project developments over the course of the project.
2. Project status briefings for community groups and concerned citizens (may include public meetings, if needed) - to periodically inform the community of significant project developments and findings, to respond to inquiries accordingly, and incorporate local concerns into the decision-making process as appropriate.
3. Informal meetings (if needed) with residents - to provide an opportunity for affected residents to express any concerns and to make inquiries to ensure effective two-way communication.
4. Program document repository - to maintain an easily accessible repository through which the public may review project outputs.
5. Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission State Superfund Internet Homepage - to provide timely, current information on state Superfund activities on the World Wide Web at the following web address:

www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/permitting/remed/superfund/index.html
6. Community Relations Plan - to reflect changes in site activities or local concerns. After the Proposed Remedial Action Document (PRAD) has been issued, the CRP will be revised to address implementation of the selected remedial action.

Elected Officials

City of Houston

The Honorable Lee Brown
Mayor, City of Houston
P.O. Box 1562
Houston, TX 77251-1562

The Honorable Rob Todd
City Councilmember District E
P. O. Box 1562
Houston, TX 77251-1562

The Honorable Annise D. Parker
City Councilmember at Large, Position 1
P. O. Box 1562
Houston, TX 77251-1562

The Honorable Gordon Quan
City Councilmember at Large, Position 2
P. O. Box 1562
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The Honorable Orlando Sanchez
City Councilmember at Large, Position 3
P. O. Box 1562
Houston, TX 77251-1562

The Honorable Chris Bell
City Councilmember at Large, Position 4
P. O. Box 1562
Houston, TX 77251-1562

The Honorable Carroll Robinson
City Councilmember at Large, Position 5
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State of Texas

The Honorable Garnet Coleman
Texas House of Representatives
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Austin, TX 78711

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5445 Almeda, Ste 403
Houston, TX 77004

The Honorable Mike Jackson
Texas State Senate
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, TX 78711

District address:
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Pasadena, TX 77505

Harris County

The Honorable Robert Eckels
Harris County Judge
Harris County Courthouse
1001 Preston
Houston, TX 77002

The Honorable Jim Fonteno
Harris County Commissioner Precinct #2
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Houston, TX 77002

Area Media

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Key Project Personnel

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Program Document Repositories

Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission

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