Groundwater Management Corrective Actions to Begin in Summer 2009

Fact Sheet – May 2009

Background

The Ansul facility is an active manufacturing plant located in northeastern Wisconsin, next to the south shore of the Menominee River. The property is bordered by the Menominee River to the north; the Sixth Street Slip and city of Marinette property to the east; Water Street, city of Marinette property, Marinette School District property, and residences to the south; and Stanton Street and Marinette Marine Corp. to the west. The installation sits on about 63 acres and includes the manufacturing area on the western portion of the property and an undeveloped, wetlands area to the east. Both sections are secured and access is restricted.

The facility began operations in 1915 manufacturing cattle feed, refrigerants, and specialty chemicals. The plant made arsenic-based agricultural herbicides from 1957 to 1977. A byproduct of this process was a salt that contained about 2 percent arsenic by weight and was stockpiled at several locations on the property. This salt subsequently entered site soil and groundwater. By 1978, Ansul ceased production of arsenic-based herbicides, and since 1983, the facility only produces fire extinguishers and fire suppression systems.

The property and associated contamination have been studied since 1974. Investigations and studies conducted since 2006 have provided the information necessary to design the corrective actions for the manufacturing and wetlands areas. The culmination of this investigation has been the identification of appropriate corrective/remedial measures including the Vertical Barrier Wall (VBW) system, the groundwater extraction and treatment system, and the systematic planting of a network of trees to assist in the control of groundwater levels within the VBW.

2009 Activities

Ansul plans to implement the first of two phases of groundwater management corrective measures at the Ansul Stanton Street Facility in Marinette, WI, beginning this July.

Groundwater is the term for underground supplies of fresh water. The on-site groundwater management corrective actions will include construction of a VBW surrounding the facility. The special underground wall will provide sustained, long-term isolation of contamination to within the facility boundary. The VBW will be constructed of nonpenetrating materials including a clay-like slurry and steel sheet piling that will extend about 40 feet below the surface.

Groundwater levels within the VBW will be controlled by operation of a new on-site groundwater recovery and treatment system and by a network of trees that will be planted and maintained on the property. Areas of the facility will also be covered with soil or gravel to prevent subsurface exposures.

For more information

The following contacts are available to help you with questions or for more information about the Ansul Facility Corrective Action Measures:

Public Information Meeting
June 4, 2009 at the Stevenson Public Library,
1700 Hall Ave.
Marinette, WI.
5:30PM to 7:30PM CST

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Stevenson Public Library
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Ansul has already implemented a rigorous EPA-approved health and safety plan. The plan specifies protections that must be in place prior to any work undertaken on the site that might result in human exposure to subsurface soil or groundwater pollution.

The corrective actions will be completed in two phases. The initial phase of work, to be conducted in 2009, will include the installation of the clay-like slurry VBW along the southern portion of the manufacturing area and a portion of the undeveloped property east of the manufacturing area. The length of the slurry VBW will be approximately 3,470 feet. The second phase of work will be conducted in 2010 and will include the installation of about 2,200 feet of the steel sheet pile VBW along the northern and western portions of the site. The second phase also includes installation of new groundwater recovery wells and a new treatment system to control groundwater levels within the facility.

Following installation of the on-site groundwater management system, each component will be maintained and monitored for effectiveness under EPA-approved operation, maintenance, and monitoring plans.

Future fact sheets will provide information on plans to address arsenic issues in the Menominee River sediment (mud) near the facility and long-term monitoring activities.

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