

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

IN EAST PROVIDENCE, MINI CALLING CARDS MAKE AN IMPRESSION. *Connect D1*

\$1.00

Weather

Periods of
clouds, sun
Forecast, 58

The Providence Journal

Home Delivery
602.277.7000

TUESDAY, November 1, 2011 | providencejournal.com

NORTH PROVIDENCE

Superfund site cleanup could reach \$101 million

Plan calls for digging up and disposing of 126,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil along Woonasquaket River

By MARK ESTEY
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

NORTH PROVIDENCE — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency could spend \$101 million cleaning up dioxin, PCBs and other chemicals that have leached into the river

along the Woonasquaket River for more than three decades.

The agency's proposed cleanup plan comes more than 10 years after it listed a section of the river, nearby ponds and wetlands as a Superfund site.

Over the summer, the agency released the findings of an extensive investigation into contamination of 9 acres just off Smith Street at the Centredale Manor and Brook Village apartment complexes and its spread

downstream.

The contamination in the area took place before either apartment complex was built, from the 1940s to the early 1970s.

A former chemical company, Metro-Alastic, and its parent company worked the site from 1943 to the early 1970s. On one part of the site, another company, New England Container, used an incinerator to recondition metal drums from 1952 to 1971.

Pollution from these operations

marked the waterfront on both sides of the river in North Providence and Johnston, the EPA says.

The contaminants, including dioxin, traveled at least as far as the Lyman Mill Dam, according to the EPA findings.

Environmental investigators identified the highest levels of pollution in the 9-acre "source area" that includes the apartment complexes. Downstream from there, at the Allendale Pond, they gauged the pollution

threat to habitats for animals and fish at 1,000 times the acceptable level, according to the findings.

The cleanup plan calls for digging up 5,500 cubic yards of highly contaminated soil in the 9-acre source area and transporting it to a disposal site, perhaps as far away as Texas.

Other polluted areas include the length of river that runs along Centredale Manor, the Allendale Pond

SEE CLEANUP, A8

Superfund Records Center
SITE: Centredale
BREAK: 13-3
OTHER: 506574



SDMS DocID

506574

CLEANUP

Continued from A1

**EPA's plan for
Woonasquatucket**

and Lyman Mill Pond. Here, the plan calls for excavating 97,700 cubic yards of sediment.

The plan also calls for digging up another 22,900 cubic yards of sediment and soil in other nearby areas.

In total, the cleanup would excavate 120,600 cubic yards of contaminated mud and soil, according to the EPA's community involvement coordinator, Stacy Greenwood.

The most-contaminated material, about 14 percent or 17,000 cubic yards, would go to one of the few facilities that receive such pollutants for disposal. One is in Canada and the other is in Texas.

The remaining 103,600 yards would end up in a special containment area to be built in one of three possible upland locations on the Johnston side of the river, Greenwood said.

Using earth-moving equipment, workers would create a giant containment area, spanning 5 to 8 acres or more, and cover that area with an impermeable liner.

A top-liner and a layer of dirt or cover fill would blanket the contaminated sediment from above.

The plan does not call for dredging contaminated sediment from the bottoms of the ponds and the river.

Workers would use steel barriers and pumps to remove the water and expose target sediments to the air before digging them up.

The idea is to keep the pollutants, which are only in the sediment and not in the water, from getting back into the Woonasquatucket, Greenwood said.

The cost of the proposed cleanup, which incorporates both the on-site and off-site disposal of contaminants, is at the higher end of alternatives proposed in July.

It's less expensive than incinerating the contaminants.

The proposed plan is preliminary and subject to change based on additional sampling of contaminants and based on public comments that the EPA will gather at three hearings this month.

The EPA's formal plan isn't expected until September 2012.

The agency will then pursue the responsible parties, the discredited companies of Metro Atlantic and New England Coastal, Greenwood said.

Negotiating with those entities could take years, she said.

Should those negotiations fail to secure the money needed for the cleanup, the EPA would finance the project from its Superfund, Greenwood said, noting that the timeliness of any funding award would rest on judgments about the threat posed by the contamination.

"It would end up getting EPA funding," she said.

"Eventually," she added.

stacyg@providencjournal.com
(401) 277-7490