F U S R A P U P D A T E

The St. Louis Sites

Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program • Summer 2001

(314) 260-3905 www.mvs.usace.army.mil

St. Louis Downtown Site (SLDS)

Plant 6 East Half Progressing

Remedial activities are progressing in the east half of Plant 6 at the St. Louis Downtown Site (SLDS). Under the 1998 SLDS Record of Decision, preparatory work within the designed excavation outline began last fall. Crews installed fencing around the cleanup area and temporarily relocated utility lines to minimize safety risks. By January, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) began removing contaminated soil from the area.

The bulk of the contaminated material was contained beneath the concrete pad, which once covered the footprint of the demolished Buildings 116 and 117. As the removal of this material progressed, additional soil contamination was discovered beneath a layer of clean clay during a routine walkover survey, which is performed to ensure the area meets the 1998 SLDS Record of Decision cleanup criteria.

During the 1800s, landowners in St. Louis typically filled in swampy areas with a mix of readily available waste (cinder and ash) material. A layer of clay was then dumped on top of the waste material. This allowed landowners to temporarily fill the low area and reclaim the land for productive use. As these layers settled, a bowl-like impression formed and more material was added to the area.

Such activities might have occurred at Plant 6, which is located within 1,000 feet of the Mississippi River. Clay does not readily absorb water, which can transport soluble radionuclides. However, the porous, mixed-cinder material may allow water to transport radionuclides to the cinder layer. While the cinder layer beneath may have been contaminated, the layer of clay above appeared to be clean in soil sample data.

Routine walkover surveys (shown here) assist excavation crews with ensuring the cleanup criteria specified in the approved environmental documents are met.

Additional soil borings for the remainder of the plant have been collected for further analysis to ensure the cleanup meets the requirements outlined in the SLDS ROD. Although most of the work has reached no deeper than eight feet below the surface, a remedial activity in one area has reached depths of twenty-two feet. Approximately 7,700 of the estimated 15,500 cubic yards have been removed to date from the 4.5-acre area of Plant 6 East Half.

Plant 1 Nearly Finished

In June, the USACE successfully completed the remediation of all except 10 cubic yards of contaminated material in Plant 1 at SLDS. Over 2,500 cubic yards of material were removed from the Plant 1 area, which was the center of Manhattan Engineer District/Atomic Energy Commission activities during the 1940s and 50s.

Progress in the isolated areas slowed through the winter months when the USACE accommodated the property owner's need to meet regulatory requirements for current operations. The owner is installing temporary overhead piping to carry wastewater from on-going business operations. Since the isolated areas are only large enough to accommodate one construction crew, cleanup activities have to be carefully coordinated.

The remaining isolated area, which contains 10 cubic yards of contaminated material, is the final area in Plant 1 impacted by the property owner's project. Cleanup of this final isolated area of contamination, which is located

Upcoming Events

Information Releases:

Fall Newsletter - September 2001

Upcoming Meetings:

St. Louis Oversight Committee Meeting at the FUSRAP Project Office at 11:30 a.m. on July 13th, August 10th, and September 14th. (Please come if you are available!)

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within one of two entrances to a building essential to current business operations, will be delayed until construction activities in the other entrance are complete.

What's Next?

Once the remaining accessible contamination in Plant 1 is successfully remediated, the USACE will return the plant to Mallinckrodt. In the meantime, crews will continue cleanup activities in Plant 6 East Half and begin work at the SLDS Vicinity Properties.

St. Louis Airport Site (SLAPS)

Removal Action Continues

Under the approved 1998 Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis for the site, removal activities in the East End Extension are well underway at the St. Louis Airport Site (SLAPS). Over 33,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil have been removed during this phase and another 18,000 cubic yards are anticipated.

The East End Extension consists of a five-acre wedge of contaminated soils nestled between the Radium Pits and East End (see photo below), which the USACE has already cleaned up. It also includes a large portion of the drainage ditch that borders the northern boundary of the site.

Although the majority of the contamination in this work area is within five to nine feet of the surface, some areas require excavation to depths of 15 feet. The USACE anticipates encountering ground-water five feet below the original surface.

Crews completed removal of the upper four feet of contaminated soil from the East End Extension this spring. The remainder of the cleanup in the East End Extension has been divided into smaller sections to enable the USACE to better manage drainage water during the excavation. Black tarps weighted with sandbags cover sections awaiting cleanup and prevent contaminated soils and water from migrating offsite. The tarps also aid in segregating clean rain water from other contaminated water in an effort to minimize water management costs.

Removing contaminated material from the SLAPS East End Extension will help ensure contamination does not migrate to recently cleaned areas such as the East End or the Radium Pits.

By removing contaminated soils from the East End Extension, the USACE can continue to minimize the potential migration of contamination from the site. Excavation activities in this area are expected to continue through the end of this summer.

Modular Building Installed

Personnel at the St. Louis Airport Site (SLAPS) have new offices. The USACE recently completed the installation of a 9,600 square foot modular office building, which was transferred to the USACE when the building was listed as excess government property.

The availability of the building is a result of cleanup work at the Weldon Spring Site Remedial Action Project in St. Charles County nearing completion. The Department of Energy used the building as an office to accommodate its workforce at its site. Authorities verified the structure was free of contamination and it became available for use by another federal agency.

The USACE immediately began negotiations to provide a government-owned building for site personnel rather than leasing office space. By February, pieces of the structure began arriving on site.

Positioned in the recently cleaned Radium Pits area of SLAPS, the building is now occupied by the USACE contractor and onsite USACE oversight personnel. The

Keeping in Touch

Mailing Lists - To receive regular updates on the project, sign up for our mailing list anytime.

Phone: (314) 260-3905
Mail: 8945 Latty Avenue
Berkeley, MO 63134
Fax: (314) 260-3941

Public Speaking - If your group, school, or association would like a presentation on our work, give us a call. We would love to talk to you!

Homepage - To reach our site, set your browser to www.mvs.usace.army.mil/engr/fusrap/home2.htm

If you have any suggestions, questions, or comments, contact our office anytime.

USACE will remove many, but not all, of the previously occupied on-site support trailers. By removing these trailers, other portions of the site will be more readily available for investigation, design and remediation activities.

What's Next?

The USACE will analyze soil samples from the McDonnell Boulevard right-of-way borings and calculate the extent of contamination beneath the road.

Hazelwood Interim Storage Site (HISS)

Pile Removals Near Completion

Under the authority of the 1998 Engineering Evaluation/ Cost Analysis (EE/CA) for the Latty Avenue/Hazelwood Interim Storage Site (HISS), removal of the final stockpile of soil is nearly complete.

The final stockpile is known as the HISS Main Pile due to its size. It once contained an estimated 25,000 cubic yards of soil and debris from property development and improvement projects along Latty Avenue twenty years ago.

Last fall, the USACE successfully removed 4,400 cubic yards of material from the northeastern corner of the pile using a small business contractor. As removal activities continued clockwise around the pile this spring, another 15,800 cubic yards were shipped to an out-of-state licensed disposal facility.

Approximately 4,800 cubic yards of the Main Pile's material remain to be loaded into gondola rail cars and shipped for disposal. Until funding becomes available to finish the process, activities at HISS will be postponed. Currently, the USACE anticipates the removal activities will resume next fiscal year, which begins in October.

What's Next?

The completion of the Main Pile removal action will be completed when funding becomes available.

North County

FS/PP Costs Re-Evaluated

The public will soon be able to review and submit comments on six alternatives designed to address the presence of Manhattan Engineer District/Atomic Energy Commission-related contamination in northern St. Louis County.

The Feasibility Study and Proposed Plan (FS/PP) for the North County Sites will present remedial alternatives to address contamination present at the following sites: Latty Avenue/Hazelwood Interim Storage Site (HISS); St. Louis Airport Site (SLAPS); the SLAPS Vicinity Properties (VPs); and, Coldwater Creek.

Removal of the final stockpile at HISS is nearly complete. Of the estimated 25,000 cubic yards comprising the Main Pile, roughly 20,200 cubic yards have been removed.

While the Feasibility Study describes each alternative in detail, the Proposed Plan will identify the alternative recommended by the USACE. The final remedy for the North County sites will be selected based on the written comments received during the 30-day public comment period. The final remedy may not be the alternative identified by the USACE as the preferred alternative in the Proposed Plan.

The USACE began incorporating the changes into the FS/ PP based on the formal comments received from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources on draft copies of the documents last fall. Some of these changes altered the basis for the cost of each alternative. To ensure the accuracy of information presented to the public, the USACE elected to perform a comprehensive review of the reported cost for each alternative.

Once the cost information is reviewed internally, draft copies of the documents will be provided to the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State of Missouri for final review and comment. Once these comments are addressed, the USACE will present the North County FS/PP to the public for review and comment over a 30-day period.

What's Next?

The North County FS/PP will be released to the public for review and comment. Copies of these documents will be available for public review at the FUSRAP Project Office and at select local libraries.

Won't radiological contamination be left behind?

Q: *The St. Louis area landscape has changed dramatically since the early days of the Manhattan Project. Developments now cover what was once empty countryside. Will contamination remain after the rest of FUSRAP is finished because of these improvements? What will protect the public then?*

A: The St. Louis area has changed. Since the time when St. Louis played a major role in the nation's early nuclear weapons program, structures such as buildings, roadways, bridges and railroads cover what was once only farmland. This statement remains true at the FUSRAP sites.

When structures such as these are present on a FUSRAP site, the USACE evaluates its usage and the potential for contamination beneath the structure. If the structure's current construction is protective of the public's health and safety, residual contamination may remain undisturbed until a capital improvement project (such as a road repair or building demolition) provides the government access to the contamination. Then the contaminated material will be removed.

To develop a process to manage this type of residual contamination, the USACE is working with landowners; railroads; utility companies; and representatives from federal, state and local government agencies to develop a long-term stewardship plan. The goal of this plan is to establish controls needed to ensure the protection of the public and the environment after the cleanup of the FUSRAP contamination is considered complete. These controls will be designed to ensure assistance with obtaining information and/or managing the potential risks attributable to the contamination is readily available. By involving these potentially affected groups early in the development process, the USACE can design a collaborative plan that satisfies their needs.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - St. Louis District
FUSRAP Project Office
8945 Latty Avenue
Berkeley, Missouri 63134