



June 24, 1993

Woods Industries Yakima, WA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is asking for your comments on the treatment of contaminated soils at the Woods Industries site located at 1 East King Street in Yakima. This fact sheet explains the comment period as well as discusses what activities will be taking place over the next several months.

The First Phase Removal:

The highly contaminated soils were determined to represent a health risk to the surrounding community and to trespassers at the site. Therefore, in January 1993, BNRR began the first phase of another removal. BNRR contractors cleaned and demolished several buildings on-site. The contamination removed during the cleaning was taken to an approved disposal facility. Building debris containing visible pesticide contamination was taken to a RCRA landfill. Other debris was taken to a solid waste landfill. In addition, bags of asbestos stored in one of the buildings were removed and properly disposed of. Metal debris was salvaged and recycled.

The Second Phase Removal:

On March 30, 1993 BNRR began excavating contaminated soils for future treatment at the site. Approximately 13,000 cubic yards of soil have been removed thus far. The excavation includes the removal of contaminated soils in the sump, washdown and lagoon areas of the site. All soils exceeding cleanup standards at the ground surface, below and adjacent to the seasonal high groundwater table are being removed. The soils are being stored on plastic liners and covered with plastic material until the treatment unit is brought to the site.

During the excavation, two areas of highly contaminated material were found. One area was a two foot layer of light yellow paste-like material about nine feet deep in the sump area. The material has been tested and results show contaminated soil containing up to 50% DDT.

The other area was a buried brick-lined pit approximately eight cubic feet in size. Approximately 30 drums were found in the pit which contain highly concentrated pesticides. In addition, the soil surrounding the area is highly contaminated with DDT and Hexachlorobenzene.

The materials excavated from these two areas are being stored separately in a special double lined container and are being evaluated to determine whether the material can be treated with the lower contaminated material.

Background

Woods Industries operated as a pesticide formulation business until 1985. Burlington Northern Railroad (BNRR), who owns the property, cancelled the lease due to concerns over poor disposal practices.

In 1986, BNRR conducted a removal with EPA oversight. During the removal, the site was fenced, the building entrances were secured, all remaining containers were analyzed and disposed of off-site, five monitoring wells were installed on-site, and highly contaminated soils in the sump area were excavated and stored in a concrete vault on-site.

In 1990, BNRR and EPA signed an agreement for BNRR to conduct a comprehensive remedial investigation of the extent of contamination and a detailed feasibility study of options available to cleanup the site. The remedial investigation began in July, 1990 and was completed in October, 1992. The feasibility study is scheduled to be completed next month.

The remedial investigation found high levels of pesticides remaining on site in three locations. Of most concern is DDT, which has been found in concentrations of up to 30,000 parts per million (ppm); Hexachlorobenzene with concentrations up to 23,000 ppm; and Dieldrin up to 200 ppm.

Soil contamination extends down to the groundwater table. Elevated levels of pesticides were found in the shallow groundwater. The most significant groundwater contamination was found in the three areas where there were high levels of contaminants in the soil. No pesticides were found in wells located off site.

In addition, an area of petroleum-contaminated soil has been located near the fence line of a neighboring fruit company. The extent of the contamination is still being determined.

The excavation is expected to be completed in about 30 days.

Treatment of the Soils:

Beginning in the early fall, the contaminated soil will be placed in a treatment system called a Low Temperature Thermal Desorption Unit. This process includes placing the soils into a unit and forcing hot air through the soil to temperatures of up to 900 degrees. The pesticides will be released from the soil as vapor and captured through condensation and carbon filters. The condensation will be separated into water and contaminants. The contaminants will be trucked to a treatment facility out of the state. Treated soils which meet cleanup goals, will be redeposited on-site. The Low Thermal Desorption Unit will be removed from the site when the cleanup actions have been completed.

This treatment was chosen after evaluating a wide range of alternatives for the site. The alternatives were analyzed for long-term effectiveness, short-term impact, cost effectiveness, and the proven ability, effectiveness and availability of the treatment technology. The Low Thermal Desorption Unit best met all of the criteria.

As a precautionary measure, the cleanup workers will be wearing protective clothing to insure their safety while handling the contaminated material. Access to the site will be restricted during the removal, to authorized personnel with health and safety training.

How You Can Get Involved:

Before the Low Thermal Desorption Unit is brought to the site, a workplan must be developed. The workplan includes details about operating procedures, performance standards, site security, monitoring procedures, health and safety information for site workers and maintenance procedures.

After the workplan is approved, a performance test will be conducted to ensure that the unit is working properly.

The Low Thermal Desorption Unit will require about 12 flat bed trucks to transport. It is proposed that the unit be assembled to the south of the remaining building on-site. The proposed hours of operation of the unit is 24 hours a day for approximately six months.

The draft workplan is currently available for your review at the Yakima Library. You are invited to comment on the workplan. Written comments should be sent to Bob Kievit at EPA - Washington Operations Office, in care of Washington Dept. of Ecology, P.O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600.

If you need additional information, you can contact Bob Kievit at (206) 753-9014. *Comments on the workplan are due to EPA by July 9, 1993.*