



# U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

## Region 4

### FACT SHEET

#### Hercules Incorporated Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Number 1

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#### INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is announcing the issuance of an order under Section 3013 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), referred to as a 3013 Order. EPA believes that the presence or release of a hazardous waste at Hercules "may present a substantial hazard" to human health and the environment. Section 3013 authorizes EPA to order Hercules to conduct on- and off site monitoring, testing, and reporting to ascertain the nature and extent of any environmental contamination at and from the Hattiesburg facility.

EPA is working in partnership with the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) to keep the local community informed and engaged during the entire assessment process.

#### Brief Hercules Site History

Hercules began operations in Hattiesburg, MS in 1923 under the name Hercules Powder Co. Since that time, Hercules produced over 250 chemical products, including resins, polyamides, ketene dimer, crude tall oil wax emulsions, synthetic rubber, and Delnav, an agricultural pesticide. Operations ceased at the facility in 2009. Investigations during the last several years indicate that soil, sediment, surface water, sludge, and groundwater at the site are contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs), such as benzene, chlorobenzene, carbon tetrachloride, methylene chloride, and toluene.

#### What is a VOC?

A volatile organic compound, or VOC, is a group of chemicals, called hydrocarbons, that easily evaporate. These types of chemicals are emitted by a wide array of products numbering in the thousands, and are widely used in industry in paints and lacquers, paint strippers, cleaning supplies, pesticides, building materials, adhesives, and fuels. These chemicals are also present in many common household products. Some of these compounds are suspected of causing, or are known to cause, cancer in humans.

#### RECENT INVESTIGATIONS & RESULTS

During the last several years, Hercules has conducted several on-site studies of soil, sludge, surface water, sediment, and groundwater.

These investigations have indicated that hazardous chemicals, primarily volatile organic compounds (VOCs), are present at the site. On-site areas of potential concern include: a former industrial landfill, a wastewater treatment impoundment basin, a sludge pit disposal area, and former production areas.



Hercules Incorporated, Hattiesburg, MS

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Under the direction of the 3013 Order, Hercules is required to determine: (1) whether any immediate risks to human health are currently occurring from chemicals released from the Hercules property; (2) the presence and degree of contamination on the Hercules property; and 3) the presence, magnitude, and location of any contamination migrating from the Hercules property. EPA and MDEQ will oversee all work performed by Hercules or its contractors.

## NEXT STEPS UNDER THE 3013 ORDER

- A draft Phase I Work Plan (due at the end of June) and a draft Phase II Work Plan (due at the end of August) will be submitted by Hercules to EPA and MDEQ for review and approval.
- Upon approval of the Phase I Work Plan, Hercules will implement off-site sampling and analysis to identify whether any potential exposures to chemicals released from the Hercules facility exist.
- Upon approval of the Phase II Work Plan, Hercules will implement on-site and further off-site sampling and analysis.
- Results of these assessments will be reported to EPA and MDEQ.

**EPA, in partnership with MDEQ, will oversee all assessments and will provide all results to the community as soon as the data and information are verified as complete and accurate.**

**MDEQ and EPA greatly appreciate the input and cooperation from residents during this process.**



Hercules Incorporated eastern boundary.

## REGULATORY AUTHORITY

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), a federal law, authorizes EPA to require facilities to examine the nature and extent of potential contamination from their operations that may endanger human health or the environment. EPA has issued an order (3013 Order) to Hercules Incorporated, located in Hattiesburg, MS, pursuant to Section 3013(a) of RCRA, to conduct on-site and off-site monitoring, analysis, evaluation, and reporting to ascertain the nature and extent of any environmental contamination from the Hattiesburg facility.



View of Hercules showing the impoundment basin.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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## Information Repository:

Library of Hattiesburg-Petal-Forrest County  
329 Hardy Street  
Hattiesburg, MS 39401