



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Region 4

FACT SHEET

Hercules, Inc.
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

Number 2

September 2011

INTRODUCTION

In May 2011, U.S. EPA issued a **RCRA 3013 Order** to Hercules, Inc., requiring the company to conduct on- and off-site monitoring, testing, and reporting to determine the nature and extent of any environmental contamination at and from the Hattiesburg facility. EPA has determined that the presence or the release of a hazardous waste on-site at Hercules may present a hazard to human health or the environment, and investigations are underway to determine if contaminants have migrated from the property.

EPA is working in partnership with MDEQ during the environmental investigations, as well as in all efforts conducted to keep the local community informed and engaged during the investigation process.



Hercules, Inc., Hattiesburg, MS

ACTIVITIES REQUIRED BY THE RCRA 3013 ORDER

The RCRA 3013 Order directs Hercules to determine: (1) whether any immediate risks to human health are currently occurring from chemicals released from the Hercules property (Phase I); (2) the presence and degree of contamination on the Hercules property (Phase II); and (3) the presence, magnitude, and location of any contamination migrating from the Hercules property (Phase II). EPA and the MDEQ will closely oversee all work performed by Hercules and its contractors.

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. 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.

CURRENT STATUS OF INVESTIGATIONS

- A draft Phase I Work Plan was submitted to EPA and MDEQ by Hercules on July 14, 2011. EPA and MDEQ have conducted a thorough review of this Work Plan and have determined that it does not present a detailed sampling and analysis plan, as was required by the 3013 Order. The Work Plan was, therefore, not approved by the agencies.
- A revised Work Plan, addressing comments received from EPA and MDEQ, was submitted by Hercules on September 19, 2011. EPA and MDEQ are currently reviewing the revised Work Plan to assess its adequacy in achieving the goals of the 3013 Order.
- When the Phase I Work Plan is approved, EPA and MDEQ will make the Work Plan available to the community. Comments will be solicited from the community and addressed in Phase II of the investigation.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

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

NEXT STEPS

- After the Phase I Work Plan is approved (expected by November 2011), Hercules will implement off-site sampling and analysis. This phase will include sampling of known private drinking water wells, surface water, sediment, and soil gas in areas of concern to assess potential human exposure.
- The draft Phase II Work Plan is due to EPA and MDEQ for review and approval on September 30, 2011. Once approved, Hercules will implement on-site and further off-site sampling and analysis to determine the full nature and extent of contamination.
- Results of these investigations will be reported to EPA and MDEQ.

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

What is a VOC?

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are a group of chemicals that contain carbon and easily evaporate at room temperature. Examples of a VOC include: methylene chloride, benzene, carbon tetrachloride, and toluene. VOCs are emitted by a wide variety 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. VOCs are found at many hazardous waste sites, and are also present in many common household products, such as furniture, office equipment, glue, and craft supplies. Some VOCs are suspected of causing - or are known to cause - cancer and non-cancer health effects in humans. Health effects depend on how much of a compound a person is exposed to and how long that person is exposed. For more information about the health effects of VOCs, contact the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry at 1-800-232-4636 or www.atsdr.cdc.gov



Hercules, Inc. eastern boundary.

MDEQ and EPA greatly appreciate the input and involvement from residents during this process!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

MDEQ, P.O. Box 2261, Jackson, MS 39225

Melissa McGee-Collier, Office of Community Engagement, (601) 961-5025 or Melissa_Collier@deq.state.ms.us

Willie McKercher, Groundwater Assessment and Remediation Division, (601) 961-5731 or Willie_McKercher@deq.state.ms.us

EPA Region 4, Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth Street, Atlanta, GA 30303

Meredith Anderson, RCRA Corrective Action, (404) 562-8608 or anderson.meredith@epa.gov

Hercules-Hattiesburg Information Repositories:

Library of Hattiesburg-Petal-Forrest County
329 Hardy Street, Hattiesburg, MS 39401
Attn: Reference Section

www.deq.state.ms.us - Click on Office of Community Engagement (left margin), Cleanup of Contaminated Sites (under Announcements), Hattiesburg, Hercules

<http://www.epa.gov/region4/foiapgs/readingroom/index.htm>