

MD-114 Baltimore City

Estech manufactured organic phosphates and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides in the 1950s and 1960s.

In 1974, W.R. Grace took over the property and replaced the existing buildings.

In 1984, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene completed a Preliminary Assessment that warranted further investigation.

In 1989, MDE completed a Site Inspection that revealed contamination from heavy metals, PAHs, and pesticides in soil and surface water.

On June 26, 1990, EPA gave the site "No Further Remedial Action Planned" status.

ESTECH GENERAL CHEMICAL COMPANY Baltimore, Maryland

Site Location

The 9-acre Estech General Chemical Company (Estech) site is located at 5600 Chemical Road in a heavily industrialized area of southeast Baltimore City. Chemical Road forms the eastern border and the Blue Circle Inc., a cement manufacturer, borders the site to the south. The W.R. Grace Company borders the site to the north and Curtis Creek borders the site to the west. The property is fenced and a locked gate restricts access to the site.

The relatively flat property is situated near the tip of Marley Neck, on Curtis Creek. Surface water runoff discharges directly into Curtis Creek. Groundwater in the area is utilized for commercial and industrial purposes. Baltimore City municipal supplies provide drinking water for the area.

Site History

Estech, a subsidiary of Swift and Company, manufactured organic phosphates and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides during the 1950s and 1960s. In a letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) dated June 1980, Estech indicated that no operating records from that time period exist. However, the letter also stated that leakage during routine operations was likely. Estech did not operate under any environmental permits during the time that it occupied the site.

In June 1970, the property was sold to the Striegel Supply Company and was subsequently transferred to Mr. Edward L. Striegel and then to his wife, Mrs. Lillian E. Striegel. In March 1974, the Striegels traded the property to W. R. Grace, enabling each party to own continuous acreage.

Within one year of the property trade, W.R. Grace demolished the Estech plant and erected structures of its own which utilized approximately ¼ of the area previously occupied by Estech.

Environmental Investigations

The property was placed on the State Master List when Estech provided some information regarding the site to EPA as a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act required notifier. Estech did not operate under any environmental permits during the time that it occupied the site.

In August 1984, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene completed a Preliminary Assessment that recommended further investigation to determine the extent of wastes on site.

In July 1989, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) completed a Site Inspection to determine the degree of contamination of soil and groundwater in the proximity of the site. Seven soil samples, one groundwater (from an on-site monitoring well) and one surface water sample (sewage discharge pipe) were collected on site. The soil samples were collected downgradient from the former and present buildings, and along the eastern and southern borders of the site. The sampling results revealed elevated levels of metals, polynuclear aromatic compounds (PAHs) and pesticides (in particular, dieldrin at 29,000 µg/Kg) in soil and elevated levels of metals and pesticides (heptachlor epoxide [0.07µg/L], dieldrin [2.3µg/L] and endrin [0.09µg/L]) in the aqueous samples.

Based on the 1989 Site Inspection toxicological evaluation, which concluded that the contamination in both soil and water samples did not pose an imminent threat to human health and groundwater is not utilized as a potable source, EPA gave the site No Further Remedial Action Planned status on June 26, 1990.

Current Status

Under the MDE Preliminary Assessment/Site Inspection (Superfund) Cooperative Agreement with the EPA, the MDE is conducting a site survey of the former Estech General Chemical Company. The Site Survey Initiative evaluates the status of those sites that were previously designated No Further Remedial Action Planned by the EPA. This initiative is intended to determine if site conditions have remained stable, provide a current description of the site, and identify and address any new pathways for contamination. The initiative is also intended to determine whether the State should recommend further investigation by the EPA, oversight by the State and no further investigation by the EPA, or no further action be taken by the EPA or the State and the State designate the site as a "Formerly Investigated Site."

Based on the information available, MDE has further requirements for the investigation of hazardous waste at this site. MDE recommends that further investigation be conducted under the Federal Superfund Program.

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