

POLREP 04

WRG4 Vermiculite Assessment

WR Grace/Zonolite Co. Ellwood City Facility

12<sup>th</sup> and Factory Street

Ellwood City, Lawrence County, PA 16117

Latitude: 40° 51'34.44" N; Longitude: 80° 18'0.03"W (revised)

Event: Removal Assessment

Attn: EPA Region III RRC and 3HS32 Section Chief

I. SITUATION (as of April 30, 2006)

- A. Based on findings of asbestos-contaminated vermiculite at a WR Grace mine in Libby, Montana, an EPA agency-wide evaluation of past and operating vermiculite facilities in the United States which received ore from the Libby mine was initiated in 1999. The WR Grace/Zonolite Co. Ellwood City facility was reported to have received vermiculite ore from the Libby mine and operated as a expanding facility from 1954 to 1969.
- B. The Site is currently used by a trucking company for short term storage.
- C. A windshield assessment of the Site was conducted on April 3, 2000.
- D. A preliminary assessment was conducted at the Site in October of 2000. Two (2) bulk samples were collected and analytical results identified 2 % tremolite asbestos in one (1) of the bulk samples and non-detect in the second bulk sample.
- E. EPA conducted a second sampling event on May 22, 2002 based on the presence of tremolite in the samples collected at the facility and the reported volume of vermiculite ore previously processed at the facility. TEM and PLM analysis were conducted on the soil samples. Air samples were also conducted at the recommendation of ATSDR.

II. ACTIVITIES

- A. Soil sampling conducted in 2002 were analyzed using both TEM and PLM. TEM analytical results showed one sample contained protocol chrysotile asbestos, excluded asbestos structures and non-regulated amphiboles also termed "Libby Amphiboles". Four additional samples were also identified as containing the Libby amphiboles. PLM analytical results on the six soil/bulk samples showed asbestos fibers (actinolite/tremolite) at less than 1 percent (< 1%) in three of the six samples.
- B. Two air samples were collected inside the facility in November 2002. Both air samples were reported as non-detect for asbestos fibers.
- C. Analytical results were provided to ATSDR for their review.
- D. In September 2005, ATSDR released a Health Consultation for the Site as part of the National Asbestos Exposure Review (NAER) project. The consultation indicated that not enough information was known about how many people may had come in contact or how they may had come in contact with the Libby vermiculite.
- E. ATSDR conducted a public meeting in March 2006 to address health concerns associated with potential asbestos exposure. Numerous residents recollected playing at a

playground located adjacent to the plant while it was in operation and were able to convey other historic details pertaining to operations at the Site.

- F. START and ATSDR conducted a brief site visit to the Site and documented the presence of visible vermiculite on the hillside behind the facility.
- G. Based on the information provided during the public meeting and site visit, it was determined that further delineation of the vermiculite ore was necessary.

### III. FUTURE ACTIONS

- A. OSC will task START to prepare a sampling plan and conduct additional sampling to delineate the extent of vermiculite ore/asbestos contaminated soil on the property's hillside.

---

Deborah Carlson Lindsey, OSC  
USEPA Region III  
Wheeling, WV