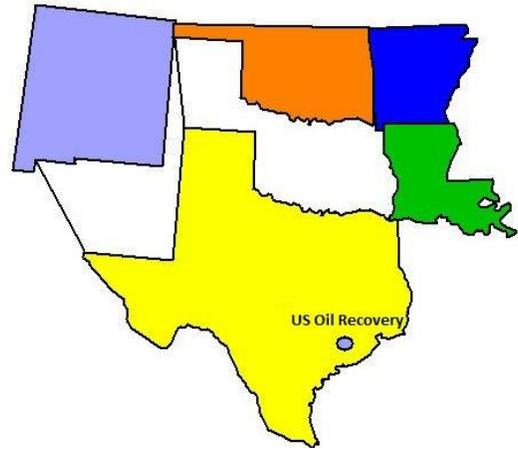


US Oil Recovery Superfund Site

Pasadena, Harris County, Texas

EPA Region 6
EPA ID: TXN000607093
Site ID: A6X7
Congressional District: 29

Contact: Raji Josiam (214) 665-8529
Updated: October 2014



Background

The US Oil Recovery (USOR) Site comprises of two separate properties which are located in Pasadena, Texas, north of Highway 225 (the Site) that began operations in 2002. US Oil Recovery operations at the 400 N. Richey Street property included receipt of municipal and industrial Class I and Class II wastewater, characteristically hazardous waste, used oil and oily sludges, and municipal solid waste. Its affiliate MCC Recycling (MCC) conducted associated operations at the 200 N. Richey Street property which was a former sewage treatment plant, owned by the City of Pasadena from approximately 1945 until it was acquired by USOR in January 2009.

Wastes onsite generally consist of oily liquids and sludges containing concentrations of volatile organics, metals, and/or mercury. These onsite wastes are contained in various containers, including aboveground tanks, roll-off bins, frac tanks, drums, and totes. Arsenic, barium, cobalt, manganese, mercury, silver, and/or vanadium have been detected in some surface water and/or sediment samples collected within Vince Bayou near the Site. Several fish consumption advisories have been issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services for the Houston Ship Channel and Upper Galveston Bay, including Vince Bayou. These advisories, which were issued due to the presence of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), dioxins, and/or organochlorine pesticides in fish and/or crabs, recommend consumption of no more than one eight-ounce meal of all fish/crab species per month. Based on an evaluation done in 2013, PCBs and dioxins are not attributed to the Site at this time. A health consultation performed by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry in 2009 concluded that exposure to arsenic and other substances detected in soil and sediment along Vince Bayou near the former City of Pasadena wastewater treatment plant at 200 N. Richey Street (Area of Investigation No. 2) does not pose a public health hazard. A health consultation has not been performed for the USOR part of the Site at 400 N. Richey Street (Area of Investigation No. 1).

In an initial response action, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) took steps to contain off-site migration, mitigate the threat to the public and to Vince Bayou, and stabilize the Site in July 2010, November 2010, and January 2011. As part of those efforts, approximately 833,500 gallons of non-hazardous oily liquid waste were transported off-site. Hazardous and non-hazardous sludges were removed and also disposed off-site.

Pursuant to an Administrative Order on Consent, dated August 25, 2011, the EPA has continued to protect the public health, welfare and the environment, including Vince Bayou, by overseeing subsequent Site stabilization activities performed by some of the Potentially Responsible Parties

(known as the “PRP Group”). The PRP Group also obtained the Court appointment of a Receiver with legal custody and control over the Site. Part of the Receiver’s role is to also assist the Group in its performance of the EPA approved actions at the Site.

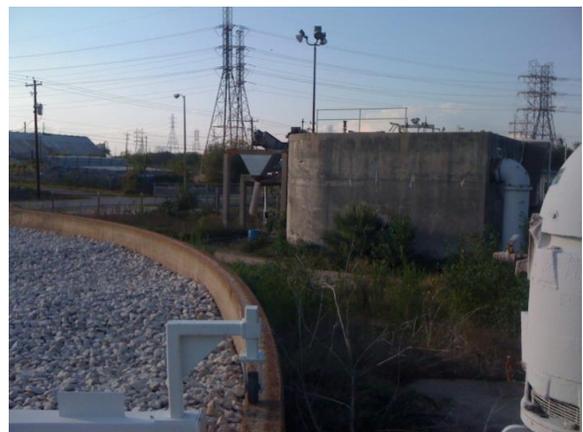
Site Photos



400 N. Richey and 200 N. Richey Aerial View



400 N. Richey



200 N. Richey

Current Status

The PRP Group stabilization activities have included Site security and video monitoring, regular inspections of freeboard in secondary containment areas and truck bays, and pump down/removal of liquids as necessary to prevent releases from those areas, and removal/disposal of sludges and liquids from the roll-off containers that are on site. In accordance with an EPA approved work plan, a remediation contractor hired by the PRP Group has been stabilizing the site. The PRP Group stabilization activities have included: (1) Site security and video monitoring; (2) regular inspections of the Site; (3) pump down/removal of liquids as necessary to prevent releases from containment areas; (4) removal/disposal of sludges and liquids from two frac tanks and 185 roll-off containers that are on site; (5) removal/disposal of liquids, sludges and PVC piping from the “bioreactor” a large aboveground concrete structure on the property; (6) demolition of the bioreactor; and (7) removal of concrete/steel bioreactor demolition debris. As part of those efforts, approximately 1,552,000 gallons of liquid and approximately 440,000 gallons of sludge have been removed and transported off-site. Approximately 260 cubic yards of soil, debris, and other solids have been shipped offsite and approximately 760 cubic yards of bioreactor debris has been sent for recycling. With prior authorization from the TCEQ and the EPA, approximately 592,000 gallons of containment pond stormwater was discharged to Vince Bayou.

The PRP Group has completed assessment of approximately 1,100 containers (drums and totes) from within the warehouse and other areas on the U.S. Oil Recovery (USOR) property. A plan for removal and off-site disposal of the containers and their contents has been developed and will be implemented. The PRP Group has been sampling the contents of 26 aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) located within a tank farm on the property and is making plans to remove the contents. Currently the PRP group’s contractors conduct routine Bi-Weekly Site Monitoring and routinely address any technical issues that come up that include maintaining adequate freeboard, controlling leaks, etc. The PRP Group will continue on-going stabilization efforts under EPA oversight as needed to protect the public and Vince Bayou.

The EPA has sent General Notice letters notifying parties of their potential liability for response efforts at the Site and has also sent Information Request letters (some in combination with the General Notice letters) as part of the EPA’s civil investigative efforts concerning the Site. The EPA is continuing to pursue other prior owners, generators, and transporters/shippers. The EPA has issued Special Notice Letters to perform a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS). Good faith offers have been received from the PRP Group and Bayer Crop Science to negotiate the RI/FS. Due to past historical operations at the USOR property, Bayer Crop Science has also been listed as a PRP and it continues to work and coordinate with the PRP Group for the USOR property at 400 N. Richey Street. RI/FS negotiations are ongoing between the EPA and the PRP Group and Bayer Crop Science.

The EPA and the TCEQ met with Bayer Corporation’s and the PRP Group’s Environmental Consultants on April 5, 2013, May 1, 2013, and August 15 2013 to discuss the RI/FS scope of work for the 400 N. Richey property. The EPA, the TCEQ, and PRP Group have had discussions for the 400 N. Richey property and the scope of work has been finalized. The PRP Group will submit the preliminary conceptual site model for the 200 N. Richey property under a separate cover.

As noted above, the bayou is within the area of several fish consumption advisories. The GCWDA re-installed signs at the bridge in March 2014 which went missing again in July 2014. They are in the process of re-installing the signs.

National Priorities Listing (NPL) History

NPL Inclusion Proposal Date: September 16, 2011
NPL Inclusion Final Date: September 18, 2012
HRS Score: 50.00

Site Contacts

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