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Mississippi Department of **ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

INFORMATION

on the former Wood
Treating, Inc. site in
Picayune, MS

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MDEQ strives to preserve
and protect Mississippi's air,
land, and water through fair
and responsible regulation.



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Site History

Timber and lumber related operations began in the early 1900s, but the wood treating operation most likely began around 1946. The Crosby Products Company pressure-treated yellow southern pine wood with preservative chemicals (creosote and pentachlorophenol). In 1973, Wood Treating, Inc. purchased the facility and continued to pressure treat wood until 1999. Residential, commercial and industrial areas presently surround the site.

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulated the Wood Treating, Inc. facility under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) from 1981 to 1999. Several enforcement actions were taken against the facility during that time.

Shallow groundwater contamination was found at the site. However, there is a large layer of clay (100-300 feet thick) between the groundwater contamination and the drinking water supply aquifer that acts as a confining unit to keep contaminants from reaching the deeper drinking water aquifer. A plan to treat groundwater was implemented in 1996 and continued until 1999 when Wood Treating, Inc. closed its business. EPA will continue to evaluate groundwater contamination. MDEQ tested Picayune's drinking water in February 2004 and no wood treating chemicals were found in the samples.

Site Contaminants

The main contaminants found at the site were creosote, pentachlorophenol, and dioxins/furans.

Creosote is a complex mixture of many chemicals. Most of the chemicals found in creosote are called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons or PAHs. PAHs are found on hazardous waste sites, especially those that treated wood with

creosote, and at forest fires, residential wood burning sites, in exhaust from vehicles, crank-case oil, and in cigarette smoke. (See <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts85.html>.)

The main source of exposure to PAHs is breathing air that contains the PAHs. Other exposure can come from contact with soils or water contaminated with PAHs. PAHs can be harmful to your health under certain circumstances. Several of the PAHs have caused tumors in animals. Some studies indicate that some people exposed to PAHs and other compounds are at risk for developing cancer. Most PAHs that enter the body leave in a few days primarily in the feces and urine. (See <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts69.html>.)

Pentachlorophenol is a synthetic or man-made substance that is made from other chemicals. Some of the toxic impurities of concern found in pentachlorophenol are commonly called dioxins/furans. The most common source of pentachlorophenol is as a wood treating chemical. Other minor sources are household pesticides. Exposure to pentachlorophenol may occur through air emissions from wood preserving plants that use pentachlorophenol and through contact with surface water, groundwater, or soils contaminated with pentachlorophenol. The most obvious health effect from exposure to pentachlorophenol is chloroacne, a severe skin disease characterized by acne-like lesions. Exposure to pentachlorophenol may also cause skin, eye, and/or mouth irritations. (See <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts51.html>.)

Residents living in the neighborhood near the Wood Treating, Inc. site may have been exposed to wood preserving chemicals if they were in direct contact with soils or sediments in the ditch adjacent to the site, on the site itself, in the creeks containing the wood processing chemicals, or possibly through the air. If you believe that you have been exposed to creosote or pentachlorophenol and are experiencing adverse health problems, we recommend that you contact your physician.

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and the Mississippi Department of Health (MSDH) are publishing this information to answer questions about the site and to inform the citizens of Picayune and the surrounding area about the ongoing investigation of the former wood preserving plant, Wood Treating, Inc. located at 403 Davis Street in Picayune, Pearl River County, Mississippi.

Question 1: Is there any data to support the possibility of contamination in between portion of Mill Creek that goes through the residential area?

A large amount of soil sampling of the Mill Creek area has been conducted. The samples collected have been analyzed and the data is being evaluated by EPA, ATSDR, and MDEQ to determine if the contamination present poses a threat to human health. There will be additional sampling conducted in the Mill Creek area.

Question 2: Will a fence be installed in the neighborhood to protect human health?

If the data from the soil samples show that the contamination present poses a threat to human health, then two options will be considered: either fence the area or remove the contaminated soil.

Question 3: Have soil samples been taken in the park and residential area along Rosa Street?

Some samples have been taken in the park area and the residential area along Rosa Street. Both areas will be considered for additional sampling.

Question 4: What does the data from the park area and the Rosa Street residential area indicate?

EPA, ATSDR, and MDEQ are evaluating the data and will make a determination if any contamination present poses a threat to human health.

Question 5: Have any gardens been sampled to determine if contamination is present?

At least one sample has been taken from a known garden plot. This data is presently being reviewed by EPA, ATSDR, and MDEQ to determine if it poses a threat to human health.

Question 6: Have any on/offsite disposal areas been located?

All known closed, onsite-disposal areas including impoundment areas and sludge disposal areas have been located. These areas were closed in accordance with the hazardous waste regulations at the time of closure. No offsite disposal areas have been identified. Anyone with information about offsite disposal areas should notify an EPA or MDEQ representative listed on this brochure.

Question 7: Will there be any health screening or assessments provided to the community residents by ATSDR?

Depending upon the review and analysis of the environmental data, ATSDR may recommend

some type of health investigation.

Question 8: Since the wood treating site now belongs to the State, can the property be mowed and cleaned up?

EPA has awarded a contract for bush-hogging the property and removing the remaining poles from the property.

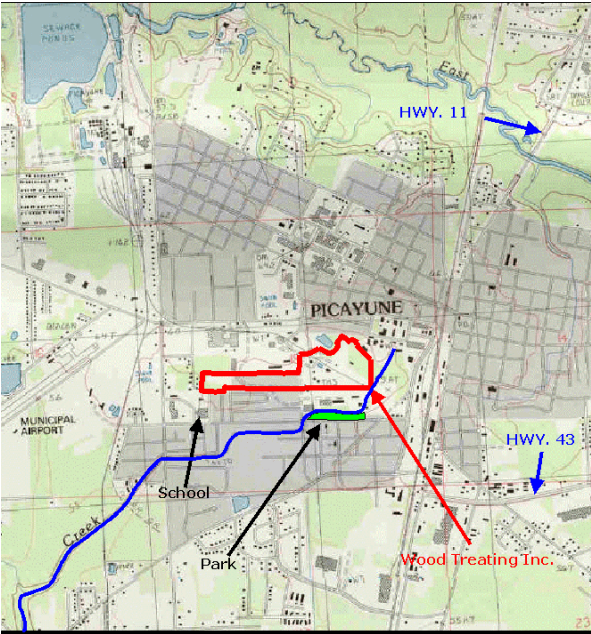
Question 9: How will EPA and MDEQ keep the residents informed regarding the cleanup progress at the site?

EPA and MDEQ will provide printed information as new information becomes available. Public meetings will also be held to keep the residents informed.

Question 10. If the wood treating site is no longer operating, why is activity still occurring at the site?

There is no activity on the former Wood Treating, Inc. site. The CCA (copper/chromium/arsenic) wood treating operation that is currently operating adjacent to the Wood Treating, Inc. site was recently purchased by Stone Wood Treating and is regulated by MDEQ. The Stone Wood Treating site is not a part of the Wood Treating, Inc. site.

Wood Treating, Inc. Site
Picayune, MS



 SITE
 PARK

