



# Superfund Community Update

## Sinclair Refinery Superfund Site Wellsville, New York

July 2007

This update is to inform the community of the progress of the cleanup at the Sinclair Refinery Superfund site in Wellsville, Allegany County, New York.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

#### **Community Involvement:**

Public participation is essential to the success of EPA's Superfund program. If you have any questions regarding cleanup activities at the site, please contact Michael Negrelli, Remedial Project Manager, at (212)-637-4278, or Michael Basile, Community Involvement Coordinator at (716)-551-4410.

#### **Superfund:**

For information on the Superfund process, please visit: EPA's web site at: [www.epa.gov/superfund](http://www.epa.gov/superfund). The web site contains information on the various tools and resources available to communities.

#### **For information specific to the Sinclair Refinery site, visit EPA Region 2's website at:**

<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/sites/npl/nar190.htm>

#### **Regional Public Liaison:**

Should you have concerns or complaints about the Superfund program. Please call (888) 283-7626.

#### **Information Repository Documents:**

David A. Howe Library  
155 North Main Street  
Wellsville, New York 14895

US EPA  
Superfund File Room  
290 Broadway 18<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10007-1866

### **Site History**

The Sinclair Refinery site covers approximately 100 acres adjacent to the west bank of the Genesee River, one-quarter mile south of downtown Wellsville, New York. The refinery was built in the late 1800's and operated by the Wellsville Refining Company until 1919 when the Sinclair Refining Company (now Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO)) purchased the property. Sinclair operated the refinery until 1958, when a fire ended operations. After closure of the refinery, a majority of the property was transferred to the Village of Wellsville, which subsequently conveyed land parcels to various entities, including the State University of New York and the several companies now occupying the site.

### **Completed Cleanup Activities**

During refinery operations, various types of wastes including cloth filters, oil sludges, contaminated soil, pesticides, heavy metals, and fly ash were disposed of in two on-site landfills located at the southern end of the site along the west bank of the Genesee River. In 1981, record rainfalls combined with the erosive effects of the Genesee River caused debris from the landfills to wash into the river, resulting in an interim action undertaken by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to stabilize the riverbank adjacent to and downstream from the landfills. In 1983, following further inspections, the site was placed on the EPA National Priorities List. In order to address the potential threats posed by the site to the local drinking water supply, in 1988, EPA, NYSDEC, and ARCO relocated the town's river water intake from a point downstream of the site to a point upstream. Recognizing that stabilization of the eroding landfill required immediate attention, EPA designated this area of the site as the first stage of activity where remediation would be accomplished and the remaining refinery property, which required further characterization, as the second stage of activity.

In 1985, the EPA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) which established the consolidation and capping of two small landfills and partial channelization of the adjacent Genesee River. ARCO entered into a Consent Decree to perform this work and all remedial activities under stage one were completed by 1994. Approximately 464,640 tons (290,400 cubic yards) of waste material were contained within the landfill. Operation and maintenance of this area of the site is ongoing.

In addition, a study into the nature and extent of contamination on the refinery portion of the site was performed by ARCO under an EPA order. The study found the site soils and groundwater to be impacted by volatile

organic compounds, semi-volatile organic compounds, and heavy metals. In 1991, the stage two remedy decision was made to excavate and dispose of surface soils exceeding the remedial cleanup criteria for arsenic and lead and the extraction and treatment of contaminated site groundwater. Completion of the surface soils excavation and disposal was accomplished in 1994, with the removal of approximately 24,000 tons (15,000 cubic yards) of contaminated soil. Additionally, three removal actions were completed at the site between 1991 and 1995. These actions included the demolition and removal of an asbestos-containing powerhouse building at the site, including the demolition of a 245-foot concrete and brick smokestack and the excavation and removal of two underground storage tanks uncovered in the process of the powerhouse removal. Additionally, an oil-water separator was decommissioned and removed from the site and a drum removal was performed at a building used as a storage facility by a previous site occupant.

Groundwater treatment has been addressed in two phases. Phase 1 was a subsurface source removal operation, accomplished primarily through air sparging and soil vapor extraction. Phase 1 was initiated in 1993 and completed in 2003, resulting in the removal of more than 160,000 pounds of subsurface contamination acting as a source to groundwater contamination. EPA determined that a Phase 2 groundwater remedy was necessary to address remaining areas of subsurface contamination; in addition to the site groundwater, this includes some light non-aqueous phase liquid (LNAPL) impacted material in the riverbed of the Genesee River adjacent to a portion of the site and in the main drainage swale.

### Current and Future Cleanup Activities

The Phase 2 groundwater remedy is the final remedial action planned at the site. The major components of the Phase 2 remedy include the construction of a groundwater extraction and wetland treatment system, the construction of a barrier wall, along with surface water and upgradient groundwater controls, to prevent groundwater from migrating to the river, and the excavation of LNAPL-impacted hot spots from the river bottom and main drainage swale.

The design of the groundwater extraction and wetland treatment system was completed in May 2007. The current and projected schedule for site work is as follows:

Date:	Activity:
July 2007	Mobilization and site preparation.
August 2007	Installation of a pilot trench to collect groundwater; groundwater will be treated at the current on-site water treatment plant until the wetland treatment system is operational in 2008.
August - September 2007	Grading and foundation construction of the wetland treatment system.
September - October 2007	Pilot trench for groundwater collection will be extended northward to capture all impacted site groundwater.
Winter 2008	Completion of the design for remaining Phase 2 elements.
Spring 2008	Completion of the wetland treatment system and begin construction of remaining Phase 2 elements.

Safety and security personnel will be present during construction activities and fencing will be used to contain the work areas. The work is being performed by ARCO and overseen by EPA and NYSDEC. Details of the nature of the work can be found in the "Site Management Plan for the Phase II - 1 Remedial Construction," located in the site repositories. When the Phase 2 remedy is completed, all potential threats to human health and the environment will be addressed.