

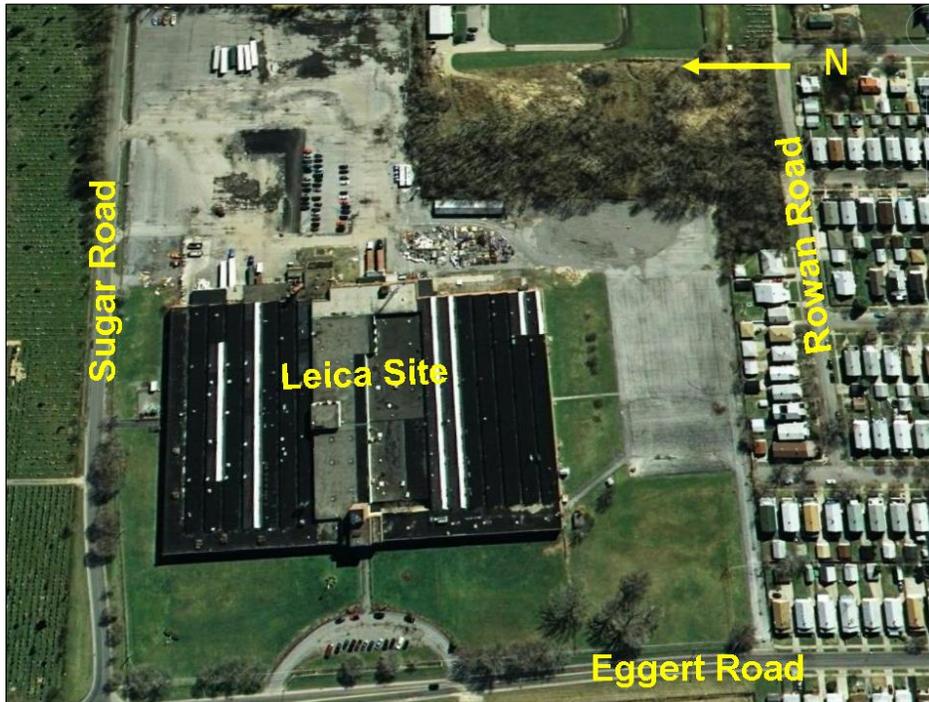


FACT SHEET

Additional Investigation Activities to Begin at Leica Site in Town of Cheektowaga

March 2009

Site #915156



Introduction

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) would like to update you on environmental investigation activities being planned at the Leica, Inc. (Leica) Site located on Eggert Road in the Town of Cheektowaga. Work at the site is being conducted through the New York State Superfund Program, New York's program for identifying, investigating and cleaning up sites where consequential amounts of hazardous waste may exist. Previous cleanup, or remedial, work at the site addressed most of the environmental contamination. Upcoming investigation activities will be performed to determine if the remaining contamination is impacting the area surrounding the site.

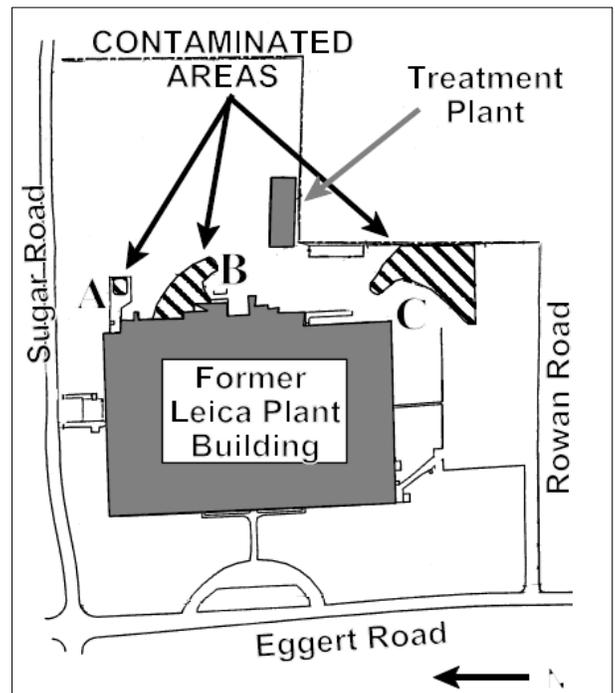
Site Background

The Leica manufacturing complex was built in 1938 by the Spencer Lens Company for the manufacture of scientific instruments and high quality optical devices. Since then, the property has been owned by various firms which also manufactured similar optical products. Leica acquired the facility in 1990 but ceased business operations at the site in 1993. Leica has, however, retained ownership of part of the land where contamination was identified. The majority of the site, including buildings and parking areas, has been utilized as warehouse and distribution facilities since 1993.

Previous Cleanup Activities

In October 1993, Leica entered into a Consent Order with the NYSDEC to investigate and remediate the site. A consent order is a legal document signed by NYSDEC and a respondent that obligates the respondent to complete activities defined by the order. The investigation found contamination consisting of trichloroethylene (a common degreasing solvent), its related chlorinated compounds, and petroleum products. For more information on trichloroethylene, visit the ToxFAQ page on the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) website at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts19.html>.

Three separate areas of the facility were contaminated. Area A had been a drum storage area; Area B was a loading area where use of solvents, possible spilling, and some waste disposal occurred; and Area C was a disposal area for ash generated by a coal-fired boiler at the plant. To address the impacted areas, Leica implemented cleanup measures in 1999, including:



- Installing a Dual Vacuum Extraction/Pneumatic Fracturing/Air Injection system to remove groundwater within the shallow groundwater zone and treat the soil. Pneumatic fracturing involves injecting high-pressured air into the ground, creating cracks in the soil and maximizing the effectiveness of the vacuum extraction;
- Installing a deeper Groundwater Extraction and Treatment System to address contamination that penetrated bedrock. The system was designed to collect groundwater using recovery wells extending 45 feet below the surface and to prevent the movement of contaminants off the property; and
- Implementing a long term monitoring program to ensure the effectiveness of the selected remedy.

The Vacuum Extraction system began operating in December 1999. Subsequent soil sampling at areas A and B revealed that remedial measures achieved the cleanup objectives of reducing contaminant concentrations to levels deemed safe for residential development. The system was shut down in June 2002. However, soils in area C did not meet cleanup objectives. As a result, Leica in 2003 and 2004 excavated approximately 9,500 tons of contaminated soil from Area C and properly disposed it.

While the majority of the contamination has been removed from the site, low levels of contaminants still exist within the groundwater below the site. This groundwater is located within the layer of bedrock first encountered at about 16 feet below the ground surface. To address this remaining contamination, the Groundwater Extraction and Treatment System has been in operation since 2002. It will continue to operate until groundwater remedial goals are achieved or until it can be demonstrated that contaminant concentrations have been reduced to the point that the extraction system can no longer effectively remove residual contamination. The groundwater is tested once or twice a year from 15 monitoring wells.

In May 2008, Leica injected a solution known as Hydrogen Release Compound (HRC) in areas showing elevated levels of chlorinated compounds. HRC speeds up groundwater remediation by helping to break down the contaminants.

Next Steps

Leica plans to conduct additional studies in Spring 2009 near the site to find out if any vapors are being released from the contaminated groundwater. Leica will also install four monitoring wells at two locations along Rowan Road to determine the condition of groundwater. A report detailing the results of the investigation is expected to be completed by late Summer 2009. NYSDEC will keep the public notified about developments at the site through fact sheets similar to this one.

Who Should I Call If I Have Questions About the Site?

Questions regarding the investigation of this site are welcome. Should you have any questions, please contact the following representatives:

Project-related Questions

Mr. Robert McPeak
Energy Solutions
143 West Street
New Milford, CT 06776
(801) 303-1092
rmcpeak@energysolutions.com

Environment-related Questions:

Mr. Jaspal Walia
NYSDEC Region 9 Office
270 Michigan Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14203
(716) 851-7220
jswalia@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Health-related Questions:

Mr. Cameron O'Connor
New York State Department of Health
584 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14202
(716) 847-4385
cho01@health.state.ny.us

Locations to View Project Documents

Two locations have been established as document repositories to provide you with access to project information. All documents relevant to the site's remedial program are available for review at the following locations:

Reinstein Memorial Branch Library
2580 Harlem Road
Cheektowaga, NY 14227
(716) 892-8089

NYSDEC Region 9 Office
270 Michigan Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14203
(716) 851-7220

More information may be found at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37554.html>. Look for the Leica entry under the Erie County heading.