



Frequently Asked Questions

Former Scott Technologies Inc. (STI) Site

Site #808049

Acronyms

AOC – Area of Concern
COC – Contaminant of Concern
EHS – Elmira High School
FRA – Former Recreation Area I
IRM – Interim Remedial Measure
NYSDEC – Department of Environmental Conservation
NYSDOH – Department of Health
Order - Order on Consent and Administrative Settlement
PAH - Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons
PCB – Polychlorinated Biphenyls
SCO – Soil Clean-up Objective
STCC – Southern Tier Commerce Center
STI – Scott Technologies, Inc.
STRA – Short Term Remedial Action
SVOC – Semi-volatile Organic Compounds

Overview

1. *What is the Site history?*

The Site was used for heavy industry beginning in the 1880s to the mid-1980s and was previously part of an 83-acre facility that included the Site and the current Elmira High School (EHS) parcel to the north. From 1887 to 1909 B.W. Payne & Sons produced high speed steam engines. Morrow Manufacturing made drill-chucks, machine parts, and a line of tools from 1909 to 1935. The manufacturing activities of B.W. Payne & Sons and Morrow Manufacturing were conducted in the northern portion of the 83-acre facility currently occupied by EHS. Remington Rand began manufacturing typewriters in 1936 with main manufacturing activities occurring north of the Site. Building 88, the primary structure at the Site was constructed in 1942 under government order for the manufacture of the Norden bomb sight. The building was often referred to as the “N Plant”. Production of the Norden bomb sight at the N-Plant continued until October 1944.

By the early 1970s, manufacturing activities at the facility were reduced and consolidated in the southern portion of the facility that included, in part, the Site until the facility closed in 1972. The Site was deeded to the Chemung County Industrial Development Agency in 1973 and leased to Westinghouse in 1974. Westinghouse used the property primarily for warehousing activities. American LaFrance took over the Westinghouse lease of the Site in 1980 and manufactured and assembled fire engines from 1982 to 1985. Figgie International, Inc., the owner of American LaFrance, gained full title to the property from the Chemung County Industrial Agency in 1985, shortly before ceasing manufacturing activities at the property. Figgie International, Inc. changed its name to Scott Technologies, Inc. (STI) in April 1998. Equilibrium Equities, Inc., the current owner, purchased the property from STI in November 2005 and redeveloped it as the Southern Tier Commerce Center (STCC). The property is currently used for warehousing and light manufacturing.



2. What is Unisys's role?

Unisys is the corporate successor to Remington Rand and therefore a responsible party having liability to complete the investigation and cleanup of the Site and off-site impacts.

In accordance with the Order on Consent and Administrative Settlement (Order) with NYSDEC, dated 16 July 2014, Unisys is conducting a Site Characterization to determine if residual sources of contamination in addition to potential routes of human exposure exist and whether further investigation and cleanup is necessary.

3. What Site investigation and remediation activities have been completed?

A Preliminary Site Assessment report for the Former Remington Rand plant (Dames & Moore, 1988) was completed on behalf of Unisys and submitted to NYSDEC.

Scott Technologies, Inc. (STI) entered into a Voluntary Cleanup Agreement with NYSDEC in January 1999 to conduct investigation and remedial activities at the Site. Prior actions completed by STI included voluntary investigations and the removal of four registered underground storage tanks in 1993. STI conducted a voluntary remedial action between October 1999 and March 2000 that included removal and disposal of low voltage Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB) capacitors, cleaning or decommissioning of tanks/vessels, concrete clarification chambers or above-ground storage tanks, and excavation of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in soil.

STI conducted an additional remedial action in the Former Recreation Area (FRA) on the southern portion of the Site in October 2004. This included limited excavation of shallow soils to depths of two to eight inches to meet NYSDEC cleanup goals for the FRA and limiting public access with a perimeter fence, warning signs, and locked gates. Cleanup activities at the Site – including engineering controls (fencing, soil cover), deed restrictions, and a soil management plan – were completed and NYSDEC issued a release of liability in 2006 for the investigated and remediated areas of the site.

In 2013, NYSDEC found new information about former Remington Rand industrial operations and identified four AOCs not addressed by STI voluntary cleanup activities. In 2015 Unisys began a Site Characterization to determine if residual sources of contamination still exist and if additional investigation or cleanup is necessary. From May 2017 through May 2020, Unisys used a portion of the Site located south of Building 88 with the agreement of STCC and NYSDEC as a Material Staging Area (MSA) to stockpile soils excavated during Interim Remedial Measures (IRM) conducted on the Former Sperry Remington Site – North Portion (NYSDEC #c808022). These stockpiled soils were reused as backfill at the Former Sperry Remington Site–North Portion per NYSDEC approval or transported for disposal to an appropriate facility. The MSA was decommissioned and restoration of the affected property was completed in May 2020.

In Spring 2020, Unisys conducted a shallow soil removal cleanup at the Site that included the MSA before it was decommissioned in May 2020. Areas addressed by this interim remedial measure included those adjacent to the MSA and a previously unaddressed area within the FRA. The completed IRM removed surface and shallow subsurface soils with PCBs, PAHs and metals above NYSDEC industrial use cleanup standards.



Contaminants of Concern (COC)

4. What is a PCB and why is it a contaminant of concern?

PCBs are a group of man-made organic chemicals consisting of carbon, hydrogen and chlorine atoms and belong to a broad family of man-made organic chemicals known as chlorinated hydrocarbons. PCBs were domestically manufactured from 1929 until manufacturing was banned in 1979. They have a range of toxicity and vary in consistency from thin, light-colored liquids to yellow or black waxy solids. PCBs have no known taste or smell. Due to their non-flammability, chemical stability, high boiling point, and electrical insulating properties, PCBs were used in hundreds of industrial and commercial applications including:

- Electrical, heat transfer and hydraulic equipment
- Plasticizers in paints, plastics and rubber products
- Pigments, dyes and carbonless copy paper
- Other industrial applications

PCBs are a contaminant of concern because they have been detected in soil at the site above state cleanup standards that are protective of public health and the environment. Additional information about PCBs can be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/pcbs/learn-about-polychlorinated-biphenyls-pcbs>.

5. What are PAHs and why are they contaminants of concern?

PAHs or polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons are a class of semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) that occur naturally in coal, crude oil, and gasoline. SVOCs are a diverse group of organic chemicals that can be found in pesticides, ingredients in cleaning agents and personal care products, additives to vinyl flooring, furniture, clothing, cookware, food packaging, and electronics.

Because PAHs have been detected in soil at the Site above state cleanup standards that are protective of public health and the environment. Additional information about PAHs can be found at: https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-03/documents/pahs_factsheet_cdc_2013.pdf

6. What are heavy metals and why are they contaminants of concern?

Heavy metals are inorganic compounds considered hazardous at elevated concentrations because of their potential toxicity to human health and the environment. Heavy metals include arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury, selenium, and silver. These along with metals such as copper, nickel and others were used in former industrial operations, have been detected in soil/sediment at the Site above state cleanup standards that are protective of public health and the environment.

Next Steps

7. What is the schedule for completing the Site Characterization and other necessary actions?

Data from May 2020 associated with completion of the shallow soil IRM indicated additional Site Characterization investigation activities will be needed to assess the extent of contamination in several areas including adjacent to IRM soil excavation and MSA areas as well as unfenced areas south of Building 88. To obtain the additional data needed, Unisys is preparing a 4th Amendment to the Site Characterization work plan which is anticipated to be completed before the end of 2020 and implemented in 2021. Based on those findings, next steps for any further investigation and cleanup will be evaluated.



For More Information

8. *Where can I find more information?*

The NYSDEC maintains a web page with additional information and a “Project Hotline” for questions:
<https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/102390.html>

NYSDEC and New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) staff are always available to provide updates or answer any questions community members, faculty, or other stakeholders may have.

For cleanup-related questions, please contact:

Tim Schneider, P.E. NYSDEC 6274 East Avon-Lima Road Avon, NY 14414 Phone: 585-226-5480
<mailto:timothy.schneider@dec.ny.gov>

For health-related project questions, please contact:

Sara Bogardus NYSDOH Empire State Plaza, Corning Tower Room #1787 Albany, NY 12237 Phone:518-402-7860 beei@health.ny.gov

9. *How do I stay informed?*

NYSDEC and NYSDOH will continue to keep the public informed as this work progresses and as development of cleanup plans are finalized.

Sign up for the NYSDEC’s contaminated sites county-specific email listserv to receive Site-related information and announcements for all contaminated sites in the county here:
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html>