



Former Zonolite/W. R. Grace Site

U.S. EPA | HAZARDOUS WASTE PROGRAM AT EPA NEW ENGLAND

THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND REMOVAL PROGRAM

responds to chemical, biological and radiological releases and large-scale national emergencies, including homeland security incidents. EPA conducts short term cleanups in the removal program when necessary to protect human health and the environment by either funding response actions directly or overseeing and enforcing actions conducted by potentially responsible parties.



BACKGROUND:

From 1963 to 1992, two companies, Zonolite and W.R. Grace occupied the facility in Easthampton. Zonolite / W.R. Grace both operated an exfoliation plant at the facility in Easthampton, MA, producing attic insulation and Monokote fireproofing materials. W.R. Grace received vermiculite concentrate, containing amphibole asbestos fibers, from the Zonolite mine in Libby Montana. W.R. Grace shipped the vermiculite concentrate by rail to the Easthampton facility. From the 90's through 2000 JPS Acquisition Elastomerics Company leased out this facility from building owner, Oldon Limited Partnership (Oldon). JPS used the facility as a warehouse. Today, Oldon still owns the property, which is used for additional storage by DOS Concrete Service.

WORK BEING DONE:

The site consists of several properties with asbestos-containing soils including the former W.R. Grace facility and its adjacent properties. Beginning on September 27, 2010, W.R. Grace will begin removing the asbestos fibers located inside the building and in the surface and subsurface soils. W.R. Grace will place and cover the asbestos-containing soil on the Oldon property. EPA and MassDEP will oversee the work on this project.



Image of the old rail line that the Department of Transportation will be adding to the bike path.

Asbestos in the facility is a dust-like material. In order to remove the asbestos from the facility W. R. Grace will use a HEPA vacuum and wet-wiping cleaning techniques. The building will be cleaned to meet the post-asbestos abatement standards. At the conclusion of asbestos abatement activities, this area will be inspected and cleared by a Massachusetts-licensed asbestos project manager.

WHAT TO EXPECT TO SEE IN THE AREA:

Between September 27, 2010 and December 2010 onlookers can expect to see more truck traffic in the area. There will also be some heavy duty construction equipment such as excavators on the property. People performing environmental sampling and removal activities on site will be wearing white-protective gear. This is meant to keep the workers from directly contacting any contaminated materials. Access to the former railroad trail will be restricted during much of this time-period.

FUTURE PLANS:

Once the facility is cleared of asbestos, the Department of Transportation will be able to come in and continue their work on the Manhan Bike Trail. The bike trail is expected to be completed in 2011.

ADDITIONAL CONTACT:

Catherine Wanat, *Mass DEP, Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup* (413) 755-2216; catherine.wanat@state.ma.us

KEY CONTACTS:

JOHN M'KEOWN

EPA New England
On-Scene Coordinator
(617) 918-1793
mckeown.john@epa.gov

EMILY ZIMMERMAN

EPA New England, Community Involvement Coordinator
(617) 918-1037
zimmerman.emily@epa.gov

GENERAL INFO:

EPA NEW ENGLAND

5 Post Office Square
Suite 100
Boston, MA 02109-3912
(617) 918-1111
www.epa.gov/region1/

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