



EPA, Dow chemical continue to negotiate river cleanups

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(Chicago, Ill. - Dec. 21, 2007) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 today extended a deadline with Dow Chemical to negotiate a settlement to conduct and finance an investigation, a study and interim cleanup actions for dioxin contamination in the Tittabawassee River system.

On Oct. 10, EPA called for negotiations under provisions of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, or Superfund. Superfund specifies the process in which a remedial investigation and feasibility study must be conducted, as well as the design and execution of a cleanup plan. EPA established a Dec. 10 deadline to resolve negotiations, with the option to extend the negotiations if appropriate.

"Negotiations to this point have been productive, though a number of key issues have yet to be resolved," said Ralph Dollhopf, Associate Director for the Superfund Division of EPA's Regional Office in Chicago.

The targeted area begins upstream of Dow's Midland, Mich., facility and extends downstream to the Saginaw River, its floodplains and Saginaw Bay in Lake Huron.

Under a Superfund agreement, Dow's investigation and study effort would be expected to evaluate the nature and extent of hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants from the site and assess the risks they present to human health and the environment. It would also need to provide enough data to develop and evaluate a range of cleanup options.

Dow's Midland facility is a 1,900-acre chemical manufacturing plant. Dioxins and furans are byproducts from the manufacture of chlorine-based products. Past waste disposal practices, fugitive emissions and incineration at Dow have resulted in on- and off-site dioxin and furan contamination.

Tittabawassee River / Saginaw River / Saginaw Bay cleanup: <http://www.epa.gov/region5/sites/dowchemical/>
Information on dioxins: <http://www.epa.gov/ebtpages/pollchemicalsdioxins.html>
Information on furans: <http://www.epa.gov/ebtpages/pollchemicfurans.html>

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