



ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
November 22, 2016

EPA and DOJ Reach \$9 Million Settlement for Interim Cleanup of CTS Site in Asheville, N.C.

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ATLANTA – Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Justice announced that CTS Corporation, Mills Gap Road Associates and Northrop Grumman Systems Corporation have agreed to spend an estimated \$9 million on an interim cleanup at the CTS of Asheville, Inc. Superfund Site in Asheville, N.C.

The settlement requires the companies to undertake a two-phase process to treat the source of contamination in the groundwater beneath the former electronics manufacturing and electroplating facility at 235 Mills Gap Road in Asheville. The remedial work will begin in 2017 and will be overseen by the EPA and its contractors. The cleanup plan will address an estimated 208,250 cubic yards of material in the saturated zone between the observed water table and top of competent bedrock. The technology is expected to reduce trichloroethene (TCE) concentrations by 95 percent.

The first phase will involve Electrical Resistance Heating (ERH) to treat the Non-Aqueous Phase Liquid (NAPL), consisting of fuel oil comingled with TCE, in an approximate 1.2-acre area under the former facility. The second phase will use In-Situ Chemical Oxidation (ISCO) to treat TCE in an approximately 1.9-acre area to the north of the area being treated by ERH. The cleanup plan was expanded to include this second phase in response to public input.

Air monitoring will be conducted while the remedy is being implemented to ensure adequate protection of on-site workers and the surrounding community. Groundwater will also be monitored to evaluate the anticipated decreasing concentration of TCE in the deeper bedrock aquifer over time.

The interim remedial action will be followed by a final remedial action to address any contamination remaining after the ERH and ISCO technologies have had a chance to work, which will likely take a few years.

The CTS of Asheville, Inc. Superfund Site was the location of an electronics manufacturing and electroplating facility that operated from 1952 until 1983. International Resistance Company (IRC) built the plant and operated it from 1952 until 1959. Northrop Grumman Systems Corporation, one of the settling parties, is the corporate successor to IRC. In 1959, the plant was purchased by CTS of Asheville, a division of CTS Corporation. CTS manufactured electronic components at the site from 1959 to 1983. In 1987, CTS sold the property to Mills Gap Road Associates, a general partnership focused on real estate development, which still owns the site. The site has been unoccupied since the mid-1990s, and the buildings have all been demolished.

Historical use of solvents in the manufacturing of electronic components at the CTS Site contaminated the soil and groundwater with TCE and other volatile organic compounds (VOCs). TCE has been linked to various illnesses in people, ranging from effects on the central nervous system, liver, kidneys and immune and endocrine systems to certain types of cancer.

The cleanup is being accomplished under the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, commonly known as Superfund. The Superfund law protects human health and the environment while safeguarding taxpayer dollars by holding parties that contributed to contamination responsible for cleaning it up. Since 1980, EPA's Superfund program has managed the cleanup of the nation's most hazardous waste sites and has responded to environmental emergencies, oil spills and natural disasters.

The settlement agreement is memorialized in a Consent Decree, on which the public will soon be invited to comment. Information on how to comment on the Consent Decree will be provided by EPA and will be available on the Department of Justice's website at www.justice.gov/enrd/consent-decrees.

More information about the CTS Site: <http://www.epa.gov/region4/superfund/sites/npl/northcarolina/millsgapnc.html>

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