

Current Work

July - September 2012

In July 2012, the Corps and their contractor performed additional field activities at former waste disposal areas at the western portions of the Shelby Horizons and Pioneer Career Technical Center (PCTC) properties. The purpose of the activities was to obtain data to assist in evaluating options to ensure protection of human health and the environment.

- A number of test trenches were excavated in and around the perimeter of the disposal areas at both the Shelby Horizons and PTCT to assess the volume of fill material.
- Gas monitoring probes were installed at the Shelby Horizons to determine the potential source of methane which was observed in groundwater monitoring wells during previous field work. Gas samples were collected and sent to the laboratory for analysis.
- Several samples were collected at Shelby Horizons to confirm the presence/absence and concentration of mercury vapor.

The observations and findings from these investigation activities are summarized below:

Shelby Horizons AOC

Seven test pits were excavated in the AOC. Debris was observed at depths ranging from 0.5 to 4 feet below the ground surface, extending to a depth of approximately 8 feet in most test pit locations. The debris encountered consisted of burnt materials containing ash, glass, metal, paper and partially-burnt wood and concrete. Based on the test pitting activities, the footprint of the AOC appears to be smaller than had been indicated by a 2000 geophysical survey.

Methane was not measured in probes within the footprint of the fill area, but was again measured in the monitoring wells, consistent with previous studies. Laboratory analysis suggests that the source of the methane is not related to the buried fill or natural gas pipelines in the area, and is consistent with naturally occurring gas associated with Devonian shale present in northeast Ohio.

The field instruments did detect mercury in a small area in the southeast corner of the Shelby Horizons fill area. Concentrations were well below EPA's "risk screening criteria," the level at which the Corps would need to evaluate further action. The laboratory results were also below the screening criteria.

Pioneer AOC

Thirteen test pits were excavated in the Pioneer AOC. Debris was observed in all but one test pit and was varied in depth and composition across the AOC. The top of debris was exposed at the surface at some locations and was found as deep as 4.5 feet below the ground surface at other locations. The depth of debris was not determined at all locations due to the limits on how deep the equipment could excavate (approximately 9 feet). The debris encountered consisted of burnt waste, glass, what appeared to be medical supplies (e.g., unbroken bottles), concrete, bricks, rubble, metal, wood, lime and a limited amount of material consistent with municipal solid waste. Based on the test pitting activities, the footprint of the AOC appears to be slightly larger than had been indicated by the geophysical survey. Test pitting along the southeast was discontinued at the parking lot although debris was still being observed.

Scheduled Activities

The Corps is proceeding with preparation of a Feasibility Study for each disposal area. This study is designed to evaluate potential remedial options that will ensure continued protection of human health and the environment in the future. The Feasibility Study is planned to be available in late spring/early summer of 2013. A copy of the document will be placed on the Wilkins AFS webpage at: <http://bit.ly/WilkinsAFS> for viewing.

For More Information

For more information about the current work at the Former Wilkins AFS, please visit: <http://bit.ly/WilkinsAFS> or contact Katelyn Newton, Louisville District Public Affairs Specialist at (502) 315-6773 or by e-mail at: katelyn.c.newton@usace.army.mil.