

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
Sterling Cleaners - Removal Polrep  
Final Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region V

**Subject:** POLREP #4  
Final  
Sterling Cleaners  
B5VH  
Appleton, WI  
Latitude: 44.2730409 Longitude: -88.4088098

**To:** Jennifer Borski, State of Wisconsin DNR  
Tim Mirkes, Health Department  
Rob Thiboldeaux, WI Dept of Health

**From:** Kathy Halbur, OSC

**Date:** 3/1/2012

**Reporting Period:** 9/22/2011-3/1/2012

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

<b>Site Number:</b>	B5VH	<b>Contract Number:</b>	
<b>D.O. Number:</b>		<b>Action Memo Date:</b>	7/27/2010
<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA	<b>Response Type:</b>	Time-Critical
<b>Response Lead:</b>	EPA	<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>	
<b>Mobilization Date:</b>	9/22/2010	<b>Start Date:</b>	9/22/2010
<b>Demob Date:</b>	9/15/2011	<b>Completion Date:</b>	9/15/2011
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>	WIN000510415	<b>RCRIS ID:</b>	
<b>ERNS No.:</b>		<b>State Notification:</b>	
<b>FPN#:</b>		<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Time critical removal action.

1.1.2 Site Description

The building on-site was built as a dry cleaning facility in 1954. The dry cleaning operation has changed owners numerous times since initial construction and is currently operated as Sterling Cleaners. The property is immediately bordered on the west and north by residences. Commercial facilities are located across the street to the east and south.

1.1.2.1 Location

The Sterling Cleaners Site (Site) is located at 304 W. Wisconsin Avenue in Appleton, Outagamie County, Wisconsin.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Historic dumping of the dry cleaning solvent perchloroethylene (PCE) at the Site resulted in significant soil contamination. The PCE migrated through the soils into the groundwater and traveled offsite, resulting in vapor intrusion at neighboring properties.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

In March and August, 2010, U.S. EPA conducted site assessment activities. PCE was detected by U.S. EPA at levels 1,000 times greater than the Preliminary Remediation Goal in soils on Site, 7,500 times greater than the MCL in groundwater, and three times above the action level recommended by the WI Department of Health Services (WDHS) in the indoor air of neighboring properties.

## 2. Current Activities

### 2.1 Operations Section

#### 2.1.1 Narrative

This removal action was conducted in two phases. During the first mobilization, in September and October, 2010, contaminated soils were excavated to the extent possible, in-situ treatment was applied to remaining contaminated soils, the excavation area was restored, and a sub-slab depressurization system (SSDS) was installed at a neighboring impacted residence. Performance sampling was conducted in January and May, 2011 to determine the efficacy of the initial removal action remedies. The sampling revealed that the measures taken were reducing the PCE vapors at the neighboring properties, but that there was also an ambient contribution from Sterling Cleaners' operations to the PCE contamination detected at the neighboring properties.

On August 29, 2011, U.S. EPA and its ERRS contractor remobilized to the Site to install a remedy to address the ambient PCE vapors impacting the neighboring residences. An existing exhaust fan that vented out the north side of Sterling Cleaners was replaced with a larger air intake fan and two new exhaust fans were installed on the roof of the facility. With these modifications, PCE emissions from the dry cleaning operations are now vented away from neighboring homes.

#### 2.1.2. Response Actions to Date

A final round of performance sampling was conducted at the impacted neighboring property on September 14-15, 2011 to determine the efficacy of the U.S. EPA removal action. The sampling indicated that the PCE concentrations are now below the State of Wisconsin Vapor Intrusion Action Level. A No Further Action letter was sent to the property owner on October 27, 2011.

During this reporting period, WDNR installed groundwater monitoring wells on the Sterling Cleaners and neighboring properties to evaluate the efficacy of the removal action. Sampling conducted to date confirms continued breakdown of the chlorinated solvents in the groundwater.

The operators of Sterling Cleaners have reported to the OSC that one of the newly installed roof fans leaks occasionally. The OSC and ERRS RM have been working with the subcontractor over the last few months to correct the leak. The cause of the leak was identified and addressed. The completion date of this Removal Action was delayed pending resolution of the leaky fan.

#### 2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

EPA's enforcement team continues to evaluate financial viability of PRPs.

The operator of Sterling Cleaners changed during this reporting period.

#### 2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i><b>Waste Stream</b></i>	<i><b>Medium</b></i>	<i><b>Quantity</b></i>	<i><b>Manifest #</b></i>	<i><b>Treatment</b></i>	<i><b>Disposal</b></i>
Concrete	Solid	10 cu.yds	NA	NA	Valley Trail Landfill
PCE contaminated soil (F002)	Solid	150 Tons	007796753JJK 007796754JJK 007796755JJK 007796756JJK 007796757JJK 007796758JJK 007796759JJK 007796760JJK 007796761JJK 007796762JJK	Chemical Oxidation	EQ

## 2.2 Planning Section

### 2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

This removal action is complete. No further U.S. EPA action is anticipated for this Site.

#### 2.2.1.2 Next Steps

WDNR will be conducting a PA/SSI at this Site this year. This will involve installing additional monitoring wells and collecting additional soil samples to further delineate the western end of the plume and the contamination within the sewer lateral (believed to be a preferential pathway of the contamination). Based on the results of the additional sampling, WDNR will determine if additional injections of bacteria or chemicals to treat the soils in place is appropriate.

The SSDS and HVAC systems installed as part of this removal action will be maintained by the respective property owners.

### 2.2.2 Issues

The location of underground gas and fiber optic lines in and around contaminated area limited the amount of contaminated soil that could be excavated.

Sampling indicates that the SSDS and HVAC systems installed as part of this removal action must be operating in order for the PCE concentrations inside the neighboring residence to be below the Wisconsin Vapor Intrusion Action Level.

### 2.3 Logistics Section

No logistics issues to report.

### 2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

### 2.5 Other Command Staff

#### 2.5.1 Safety Officer

No safety incidents occurred during the removal action.

#### 2.6 Liaison Officer

The Appleton Health Department, WDHS, and WDNR were actively involved in the removal action. The Appleton Department of Public Works also assisted U.S. EPA with the initial mobilization and the Appleton Building Department assisted with the second mobilization.

#### 2.7 Information Officer

Information flyers regarding the removal action were distributed in the area and to Sterling Cleaners' customers during the removal action. Copies are available at [www.epaosc.org/sterlingcleaners](http://www.epaosc.org/sterlingcleaners).

## 3. Participating Entities

### 3.1 Unified Command

Not applicable.

### 3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Appleton Building Department  
Appleton Health Department  
Appleton Public Works Department  
Wisconsin Department of Health Services  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

## 4. Personnel On Site

During this reporting period, EPA OSC Halbur, RM Behrens, and the ventilation subcontractor have occasionally been at the Site to check on the reported leaky fan.

## 5. Definition of Terms

ERRS: Emergency and Rapid Response Services  
HVAC: Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning  
MCL: Maximum Contaminant Level (drinking water standard)  
PA/SSI: Preliminary Assessment/Screening Site Inspection  
PCE: Perchloroethylene (also known as Tetrachloroethylene)  
RM: Response Manager  
SSDS: Sub-slab Depressurization System  
START: Superfund Technical Assessment & Response Team  
U.S. EPA: United States Environmental Protection Agency  
WDHS: Wisconsin Department of Health Services  
WDNR: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

## 6. Additional sources of information

### 6.1 Internet location of additional information/report

Additional information is available at [www.epaosc.org/sterlingcleaners](http://www.epaosc.org/sterlingcleaners).

WDNR Vapor Intrusion Information: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/technical/vapor.htm>

### 6.2 Reporting Schedule

This is the Final POLREP.

## 7. Situational Reference Materials

R5 Priorities Summary		
This is an Integrated River Assessment.	Miles of river systems cleaned and/or restored	N/A
	Cubic yards of contaminated sediments removed and/or capped	N/A

The numbers should overlap.	Gallons of oil/water recovered	N/A
	Acres of soil/sediment cleaned up in floodplains and riverbanks	N/A
Stand Alone Assessment	Acres Protected	1
	Number of contaminated residential yards cleaned up	N/A
	Human Health Exposures Avoided	50
	Number of workers on site	10