



In the Works

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In The Works is a monthly newsletter providing Environment, Health and Safety (EH&S) news and regulatory updates. The newsletter is provided by Loureiro Engineering Associates, Inc. of Plainville, Connecticut. In this Issue you will find links to the following articles:

NATIONAL

EPA Announces \$74 Million Cleanup Plan for American Cyanamid Superfund Site in Bridgewater Township, NJ

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently announced a \$74 million final plan to clean up acid tars, benzene, and other chemicals at the American Cyanamid Superfund site in Bridgewater Township, N.J.

“The remedy selected in this Record of Decision will clean up the two most contaminated impoundments in a manner that is protective of the Bridgewater community and the workers at the site,” said Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. “This final cleanup plan reflects our commitment to prioritize the Superfund Program and ensure these sites are cleaned up as quickly and safely as possible.”

“More than 44,000 tons of hazardous waste will be removed from the Bridgewater community and permanently destroyed. Approximately 2.3 million gallons of contaminated liquid will be collected and treated.” said EPA Regional Administrator Pete Lopez. “This action safeguards people’s health and arrests a threat to the Raritan River.”

“Bridgewater is counting on the EPA to remove these 44,000 tons of waste. These hazards need to be out of our community as soon as possible,” said Congressman Leonard Lance, federal lawmaker for Bridgewater and member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. “I am pleased the EPA is implementing a final plan and moving forward in getting this job done. I believe the final plan to be responsible and the disposal of the approximately 2.3 million gallons of contaminated liquid will result in the contaminants’ safe removal and permanent destruction.”

The final cleanup plan, called a Record of Decision (ROD), includes excavation and dewatering of contaminated material within two waste disposal areas (impoundments), followed by shipment out of the area to a facility, for treatment and disposal. Soil impacted by the impoundment contaminants will also be treated, using on-site stabilization or solidification. Surrounding “berm

materials” that do not require treatment will be used as backfill, and a protective cover will be placed over the cleanup area. Measures will be taken to assure that the cleanup is undertaken in a way that is protective of workers at the site and the surrounding community.

Under the Trump Administration, the Superfund program has reemerged as a priority to fulfill and strengthen EPA’s core mission of protecting human health and the environment.

American Cyanamid Superfund site was included on the first-ever Administrator’s Emphasis List. The Administrator’s Emphasis List is composed of sites that will benefit from the Acting Administrator’s immediate and intense action. Specifically, the site was added to expedite the release of the Proposed Plan with EPA’s Preferred Alternative, which was released for public comment on May 28, 2018.

EPA held a public meeting in Bridgewater in June 2018 to explain the cleanup proposal and other options that were considered, and take public comment. The ROD officially selects the final remedy and responds directly to comments received during that comment period.

Background

The American Cyanamid Superfund Site has a history of industrial pollution dating back to 1915. For nearly 100 years, prior owners used the location for manufacturing chemicals. Several impoundments were constructed and used for waste storage and disposal throughout this period of time, which eventually resulted in the contamination of soil and groundwater with chemicals and heavy metals. The site was placed on the federal Superfund list in 1983.

In 1999, EPA removed a portion of the Superfund site from the 1983 Superfund listing, freeing it up for redevelopment and reuse. In 2012, the EPA selected a cleanup plan to address contaminated soil, groundwater and six waste disposal areas (called impoundments 3, 4, 5, 13, 17 and 24) at the site. That phase of cleanup, which is currently ongoing and being performed by Wyeth Holdings LLC, involves collecting and treating contaminated groundwater. The groundwater pump and treat system will prevent contaminated water from seeping into the nearby Raritan River, Cuckels Brook and Middle Brook.

The Superfund program has been providing important health benefits to communities across the country for more than 35 years. Superfund cleanups also strengthen local economies. Data collected through 2017 shows that at 487 Superfund sites in reuse, approximately 6,600 businesses are generating \$43.6 billion in sales and employ 156,000 people who earned a combined income of \$11.2 billion.

CONNECTICUT

DCP and DEEP Urge Homeowners to Make Tree Health Assessments Now While Trees Still Have Leaves

Connecticut- Several preceding years of drought and invasive forest pests have dealt a heavy toll on Connecticut's oak and ash trees. The Departments of Consumer Protection (DCP) and Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) advise homeowners to make assessment of risky dead trees prior to leaf drop later this fall.

“Now is the time to identify and make a plan for those dead trees that may pose a risk to your home and yard,” Chris Martin, Director of DEEP's Forestry Division. “Tree removal contractors are very busy these days and you could be placed on a long waiting list. While there are many reputable tree removal contractors, homeowners should practice due diligence before choosing one.”

“Scammers and bad actors target consumers who are in a rush, and feel the need to act quickly,” said Consumer Protection Commissioner Michelle H. Seagull, “That's why it's so important that consumers conduct this assessment, and any subsequent tree removal work done now instead of at the last minute. If consumers spend a little extra time doing research and homework before making a commitment, there's a smaller chance that they will experience problems with their contractor.”

Signs you have a risky dead tree:

Most healthy hardwood trees retain their leaves until the end of September, while unhealthy or dead trees have already shed or may have never produced leaves this growing season. The lack of greenery during the growing season is clear indication a tree is dead and should be removed if it is a threat to property.

What you should do before hiring a contractor:

Shop around: When looking for a contractor, get multiple quotes to ensure that you are hiring the best person to work on your property. Remember, the cheapest option may not always be the best.

Verify a contractor has the proper credential: Anyone making changes to your property, including removing trees, must have a home improvement contractor registration, which can be verified by visiting elicense.ct.gov. However, if someone is doing more detailed work such as correctively pruning a tree, or doing other work associated with prolonging a tree's life, they must have an Arborist's license from DEEP.

Have a contract: Home improvement contractors are required to have a written contract with you before work may begin. Make sure you read it in its entirety, and ask any questions you may have. It will be helpful to know how long the work is anticipated to take, the costs, the final outcome and what responsibilities you may have in the process.

Ask for references: Ask your potential contractor for references from homeowners who have had that contractor do tree removal work on their property.

Be aware of scams: Avoid contractors who display signs of being a scammer. If someone makes the first contact with you, knocks on your door, won't use a contract, doesn't have references, or encourages you to pay in an untraceable form of payment such as wire transfer or cash, chances are it's a scam.

If you have a complaint regarding a home improvement contractor that you haven't been able to resolve by contacting that individual or business, you are encouraged to file a complaint with DCP by emailing dcp.complaints@ct.gov.

Background info

Starting in 2015, Connecticut experienced three consecutive years of expanding Gypsy moth caterpillar defoliation caused by dry springs. This drought inhibited a moisture dependent soil fungus that solely impacts gypsy moth caterpillar from emerging. In addition, the statewide establishment of Emerald ash borer is causing extensive ash mortality.

Connecticut has been long recognized as having the highest WUI indices in the United States. WUI otherwise known as the Wildland-Urban Interface, is a term that recognizes the proximity of peoples' homes to forests, wetlands and grasslands. A common term used in fire prone areas of the US, many are surprised at Connecticut's WUI ranking which is caused by a high percentage of tree canopy cover over a densely populated area. WUI helps explain why so many Connecticut residents are impacted by forest pest outbreaks and severe storms.

Massachusetts

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Funding for Innovative Technologies at Wastewater Treatment Plants

The Baker-Polito Administration recently awarded \$402,000 in grants to four municipalities and technology providers to support innovative technical advancements for publicly-owned wastewater treatment plants in Amherst, Fairhaven, Pittsfield, and Westfield. The funding, awarded through the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center's (MassCEC) Wastewater Treatment Pilot program, will support publicly-owned wastewater treatment districts and authorities that demonstrate innovative water technologies that increase energy efficiency, recover resources and remediate nutrients such as nitrogen or phosphorus.

"Working with municipalities to make their wastewater treatment plants more efficient will provide benefits to their residents and the environment," said Governor Charlie Baker. "By supporting these pilot projects, our Administration continues our work with municipalities to reduce energy usage and decrease costs while reinforcing Massachusetts position as a national leader in water innovation."

Funding for these programs comes from MassCEC's Renewable Energy Trust which was created by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1998 as part of the deregulation of the electric utility market. The trust is funded by a systems benefit charge paid by Massachusetts electric customers of investor-owned utilities, as well as municipal electric departments that have opted to participate in the program.

"Supporting this pilot program will help to drive innovation in the water innovation sector and ensure that Massachusetts wastewater treatment plants have access to cutting-edge technologies," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton. "These pilots will help reduce peak energy demand across the state as the Commonwealth works to meet our ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets."

"Our agency was pleased to collaborate with the Clean Energy Center and the Commonwealth's wastewater facilities to advance new technologies that will improve treatment processes and protect our water bodies," said Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Martin Suuberg. "This is a great example of the Commonwealth supporting treatment technology innovations that will provide a knowledge base and real facility experience as we transition to the environmentally effective treatment facilities of the future."

Each project being awarded is a partnership between a municipality and a technology provider. The four municipalities provided a cost-share of \$547,384.

The following municipalities and technology providers were awarded:

- **MICROrganic Technologies and the Town of Pittsfield- \$56,888** - The funding will be used to implement an energy-neutral technology to potentially replace current energy-intensive processes. The team will aerate organic waste without blowing air through it, which will significantly decrease the Town of Pittsfield's energy costs.
- **Nanostone Water Inc. and the Town of Amherst- \$145,027** - The funding will be used to treat wastewater using innovative treatment and oxidation methods. The goal of this pilot project is to demonstrate the effectiveness of these new methods regarding reuse of water for non-potable uses.
- **Microvi Biotech, Westech Engineering Inc., and the Fairhaven Water Pollution Control Facility - \$150,000** - The funding will be used to demonstrate a dual-pronged innovation for treating wastewater. The process focuses on two kinds of nutrient removal technology that is expected to reduce energy usage at the facility by 15-20 percent.
- **Hach, Woodard & Curran and the City of Westfield- \$50,000** - The funding will be used to demonstrate the benefits of ammonia-based aeration control. This demonstration aims to define the benefits and further quantify the expected 10% energy savings.

New Hampshire

New Hampshire NHDES Cautions about Cyanobacteria

The water quality in New Hampshire lakes is generally excellent. However, you should look before you leap in the water. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) is cautioning those who swim in and recreate around the state's lakes and ponds to be aware of cyanobacteria blooms. In particular, people and their pets should avoid contact with the tell-tale green blooms of cyanobacteria.

Over several weeks in August, the warm weather coupled with drenching rains and stormwater runoff (which carries excessive nutrients) have created conditions that are favorable for the growth of cyanobacteria.

Cyanobacteria can produce toxins that are harmful to humans, pets, and livestock. Toxins can cause acute health effects including irritation of skin and mucous membranes, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. In some cases, short term exposure can also result in nervous system interference including tingling, burning, or numbness sensations. Prolonged exposure can also lead to liver or kidney problems.

NHDES has issued dozens of cyanobacteria warnings in the past summer season. Updates to the list of lake warnings and advisories were posted on the NHDES website. It is likely that additional blooms will occur in other waterbodies throughout the Fall. Humans should curtail water contact while a bloom is ongoing. It is also important that pets and livestock not be allowed to bath or drink the water where blooms are present.

Cyanobacteria blooms are highly unpredictable in nature and can appear and disappear over the course of a day or, in some cases, last many weeks. In addition, bloom density will often shift based on wind direction such that higher densities occur on the side of the lake opposite from the prevailing wind. That said, most of the lakes in the state are perfectly clear of blooms. For these reasons, it is important to visually inspect the water every time a waterbody is visited. Cyanobacteria can appear as a green scum, or light green or blue flecks on the surface, or create a green hue to the water itself. Green streaks along the water's edge are also a good indicator of a cyanobacteria bloom. In short, if the water looks gross, don't swim in it!

While NHDES actively tests for these blooms, given their sometimes quickly forming nature, the public should still be diligent in avoiding waters with signs of cyanobacteria. Priority is being given to waterbodies that have the most severe blooms, and those that serve as public water supplies. Unfortunately, once a bloom occurs there is no immediate remedy to make it go away.