



Current and Future Activities

As part of its work to address contamination at the Cornell-Dubilier Electronics (CDE) Superfund site located in South Plainfield, New Jersey, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be removing trees and other plants from the Bound Brook area near Front Street and Metuchen in December 2022.

This work is needed to allow EPA to dig up and dispose of contaminated soil from the Bound Brook in the spring of 2023. The soil is contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from the former CDE facility property, now known as the Hamilton Industrial Park. The trees and plants removed from the vicinity of the Bound Brook will be replaced by EPA after all excavation activities are completed. The work is expected to take a year to complete.

EPA and its contractors are working closely with the Borough of South Plainfield to coordinate traffic control and answer questions about the cleanup activities. Residents living near the work area may hear noise or feel vibrations similar to those activities from other construction projects such as road work. When the work begins, residents may also experience increased traffic in surrounding roadways. EPA and its contractors will install and maintain fencing and barriers in the work areas along the Bound Brook.

EPA and its contractors will also set up temporary trailers, create soil staging areas, bring excavation equipment and storage containers to the work area, and temporarily install a water treatment plant at the Hamilton Industrial Park property. Some site workers may be dressed in protective clothing to keep contaminated soil off their clothes, and may wear dust masks, but this does not indicate a risk to surrounding residents. EPA and its contractors will transport the soil removed from the Bound Brook by truck to the industrial park and place the soil in staging areas that will be covered to control dust and prevent soil runoff. EPA will then transport the soil by trucks from the industrial park to permitted disposal facilities. EPA will conduct real-time air monitoring during soil excavation and handling activities to ensure the site workers and the community are protected from any resulting dust.





Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are either oily liquids or solids that are colorless to light yellow. Some PCBs can exist as a vapor in air. PCBs have no known smell or taste. PCBs have been used as coolants and lubricants in transformers, capacitors, and other electrical equipment because they don't burn easily and are good insulators. The manufacture of PCBs was stopped in the U.S. in 1977 because of evidence they build up in the environment and can cause harmful health effects. Products made before 1977 that may contain PCBs include old fluorescent lighting fixtures and electrical devices containing PCB capacitors, and old microscope and hydraulic oils.

Trichloroethylene (TCE) is a colorless, volatile, and nonflammable liquid that evaporates quickly into the air. It has a sweet odor and has been used as a solvent to remove grease from metal parts and as a chemical that is used to make other chemicals, especially the refrigerant.

Past Activities

EPA is cleaning up the CDE site in multiple stages and has divided the cleanup into four phases, or operable units (OUs). Properties near the Hamilton Industrial Park (HIP) are considered OU1. The HIP property itself is considered as OU2. The contaminated groundwater and contaminated sediment in the Bound Brook are considered OU3 and OU4, respectively.

EPA has further divided the cleanup of OU4 into four separate actions, including actions to address the sediment from the Bound Brook and the soil from the Bound Brook floodplain. EPA has already completed the first three actions to cleanup OU4. EPA disposed of the PCB capacitor debris off-site, relocated a 36-inch waterline that cuts across the HIP property, and captured and treated the groundwater along the property to prevent the release of contamination.

The remaining action, which includes removing sediment from the Bound Brook and soil from the Bound Brook floodplain, has been split into six smaller sections, called "Reaches," of the Bound Brook corridor from most upstream and closest to HIP (Reach 1) to furthest downstream (Reach 6). Reach 1, is the smallest reach of the final action, extending from the Conrail Bridge near OU2 downstream to the Lakewood Avenue Bridge. This reach encompasses approximately 3.5 acres and 1,230 feet of Bound Brook. HIP is located upstream of Reach 1.

Site Background

Cornell-Dubilier Electronics, Inc. (CDE), operated a 26-acre facility located at 333 Hamilton Boulevard, South Plainfield, New Jersey. Hamilton Industrial Park is subdivided into the industrial park, which is largely paved, and the surrounding eastern and northern areas that include floodplains bordering Bound Brook, which flows adjacent to and downstream of Hamilton Industrial Park. During site operations, the company released and buried material containing PCBs and chlorinated volatile organic compounds (VOCs), primarily trichloroethylene (TCE), which contaminated soil on the site. EPA also found PCBs and VOCs in the groundwater and PCBs on nearby residential, commercial and municipal properties, as well as in the surface water and sediment of Bound Brook and its downstream floodplain soil. EPA added the CDE site to the Superfund program's National Priorities List in July 1998.



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