
EPA Oversees Removal Action To Stop Open Burning

VIM Recycling Inc. Site

Elkhart, Indiana

August 2009

Emergency planning

To make sure the VIM removal project is conducted safely; local emergency response officials assisted in cleanup planning and will visit the site on a regular basis.

Officials from EPA, the Baugo Fire Department, the Elkhart County Emergency Management Agency and Indiana Department of Environmental Management are prepared to offer assistance in the event of an emergency.

Oversight

Field inspectors from both EPA and IDEM are present on-site several times each week to oversee the cleanup. Please feel free to contact any of the individuals on the back of this fact sheet with questions or for more information.

On the Web

A Web site is being maintained and updated regularly as the cleanup progresses.

<http://www.vimrecycling.com/>

The Web site contains links to a copy of the Administrative Consent Order, press releases and all monthly progress reports on removal of the debris pile. It is updated each month to show the latest details and photographs from the site.

Contact information for EPA and IDEM representatives is on the back page of this fact sheet.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 is overseeing the removal of a burning debris pile at VIM Recycling Inc. in order to protect residents from smoke. In response to citizen complaints and inquiries from local officials, EPA inspected the facility in May and found a large pile of smoldering wood waste releasing smoke into the neighborhood. As a result of the inspection, EPA issued a Notice of Violation for open burning on May 8. In late June EPA negotiated and entered into a legal agreement with VIM called an administrative consent order that requires the company to remove the burning wood waste from the site.

Cleanup actions

A large pile of wood waste called the "C Pile" was ignited after an explosion at VIM in 2007 and was still smoldering nearly two years later. To clean up the C Pile, a large excavator is being used to dig up wood waste and place it into a mechanical screener where it separates soil, rocks and smaller pieces of wood from larger wood segments. These larger pieces are then loaded onto trucks and sent to a nearby landfill for disposal. Residents may notice lots of activity around the site as dozens of trucks come and go each work day. EPA expects the removal project to be completed later this year, which will eliminate the source of the smoke and reduce odors from the site.

Safety measures

During the cleanup, EPA is ensuring workers make every effort to reduce the amount of smoke and dust escaping from the location. Due to the heat within the C Pile, it is impossible to stop all emissions, but workers are spraying water on roadways to control dust and applying soil, water and foam to extinguish fires. Temperatures are constantly monitored in the waste material during excavation, loading, transport and disposal to prevent new fires. In addition, the site is being monitored regularly to catch and put out any fires that may arise during nights and weekends.



Heavy equipment loads a debris pile on a sorting machine as part of EPA's removal project at the VIM Recycling site.

Contact information

You may contact these team members for questions, comments or for more information:

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