



Facts About...

Belko Property
(Voluntary Cleanup Program)

Site Location:

This 3.29-acre property consists of several masonry buildings located at 11931 Jericho Road in Kingsville, Baltimore County, Maryland. The property consists of former manufacturing buildings and paved parking lots. Overland flow from the property discharges directly to the adjacent Lower Gunpowder Falls. Water and sanitary sewer services are provided via on-site wells and septic. Domestic wells are located within one-half mile of the property.

Site History:

Originally built in 1827, the Franklinville factory was destroyed by fire in 1881. Portions of the current building were built in the 1880s and 1890s. Cotton canvas was manufactured at the property in the early 1900s, this manufacturing ended in approximately 1915. About 1925, the property was sold to Oak Tire and Rubber Company, who defaulted on their mortgage and closed in 1928. In the 1930s, piston rings were reportedly produced at the property. In 1945, the property was sold to Franklinville Industries who began producing plastics, but the entities had trouble making the raw materials into the desired forms.

In 1954, Belko Corporation purchased the property and began making rubber-belted products for industry. ALCO Industries purchased the property in 2001 and currently AXIL Corporation owns the property after purchasing it in 2002.

Environmental Investigations and Actions:

In November 1986, the Maryland Department of the Environment Oil Control Program (“MDE-OCP”) received a report of oil seeping into the Little Gunpowder Falls River. An inspection confirmed the report of oil seepage, the presence of several storage tanks, and oil in the pipe room. The MDE-OCP issued a letter to Belko citing failure to report the loss of 200 gallons of #4 oil and requiring the following: 1) submit a subsurface investigation work plan; 2) Belko to improve impermeability of the aboveground tank dike area; 3) discontinue storing cooling solution on the hydraulic room floor. In March 1987, Belko submitted a work plan to seal the dike area and install a cooling solution storage tank system, which was approved by the MDE-OCP.

During a June 1987 site visit, the MDE-OCP observed oil still seeping into the Little Gunpowder Falls River. In October 1990, MDE-OCP received another report of oil seeping into the Little Gunpowder Falls River, the Department required Belko to change the absorbents on a more frequent basis. During a subsequent site inspection, MDE-OCP observed oil seeping out of the pump house and ditches with absorbent booms installed next to the river. MDE-OCP required Belko to continue maintaining the absorbents, to complete a site assessment, and to submit a remediation work plan.



In 1991, Belko representatives met with MDE-OCP to discuss scope of work, including sampling activities, soil boring investigation, and report preparation. In April 1991, the MDE-OCP issued a letter requiring Belko to complete an environmental site assessment and a volumetric test on the line from the processing oil tank to the main building.

In May 1991, four monitoring wells were installed at the property, two wells (MW-1 and MW-2) contained liquid phase hydrocarbons (LPH). In June 1991, Belko indicated that well MW-2 was bailed for two weeks and 200 gallons of product recovered. The pump house seepage had reportedly stopped and they planned to bail the wells and maintain the absorbent booms along the river for one year. In November 1991, Belko conducted a ground water well step test (at 1 gpm) prior to the pump test to determine a flow rate. The pump test created no influence in the surrounding wells. In January 1992, the MDE-OCP received a letter from Belko indicating that the required site assessment report would be submitted in late January for review. Also a vacuum truck evacuated monitoring well MW-2 and recovered 2,500 gallons of total fluids and approximately 50 gallons of petroleum product.

In February 2004, the MDE-OCP received another report that oil was entering the Little Gunpowder Falls River. A site inspection found petroleum product seeping into the river from two locations. In May 2004, the MDE-OCP received a letter from Belko concerning the proposed scope of work, including evacuating and cleaning of four old storage tanks, removal of a discharge pipe which lead from the building floor drains to the embankment, conducting product fingerprinting analysis, and installing test pits.

In November 2004, Belko submitted a Focused Site Investigation, Interim Measures and Monitoring Activities report to the MDE-OCP. The report outlined the following: samples were collected from tanks, test pits, wells, and seeps for petroleum fingerprint analysis. Test pits were excavated in the rear of the property and waste rubber and hydraulic oil was found in some pits. The exterior pipe extending from the drain in the pipe room to the embankment was removed and replaced. Four tanks were cleaned and evacuated. Interviews with a former plant manager suggest that the oil seeps may be from hydraulic oil used in the production of molded rubber products and not exclusively from problems with the aboveground storage tank (AST) release.

In June 2005, the MDE-OCP received a Focused Site Characterization and Sampling Activities report. Additional activities were proposed in the report; 12 soil borings, six shallow bedrock cores, and two additional monitoring wells. The collection of groundwater samples was proposed from all pre-existing and newly installed monitoring wells and two on-site drinking water wells.

Late in 2006, Belko pumped and sampled the two on-site production wells. The well sampling did not detect any contamination. On March 9, 2007, the MDE-OCP issued a Notice of Violation (“NOV”) to Belko Corporation for failure to assess the vertical and horizontal extent of petroleum contamination and failure to sample the on-site drinking water wells.

On May 4, 2008, the MDE Hazardous Waste Enforcement Division (“Division”) investigated a complaint regarding the property from a Franklinville resident. The Division documented waste disposal/dump areas at the Belko plant in a site visit and provided the VCP with additional hazardous waste reports from 1989.

Current Status:

On March 20, 2007, P&L Investments submitted a VCP application for the property seeking a No Further Requirements Determination (“NFRD”) as an inculpable person. On April 25, 2007, the VCP deemed the application package as incomplete and issued comments to P&L Investments III, LLC. On October 12, 2007, the Department sent a letter to the applicant requesting information regarding their intent to continue in the program and a timetable for submitting responses to the VCP’s comments.

The applicant indicated in a November 7, 2007 letter that they intended to continue in the program and then they addressed some of the VCP’s previous comments, but changes had also occurred in the development plans. On December 7, 2007, the VCP issued a reply to the applicant’s letter indicating that additional characterization was required and that the applicant still needed to submit a Phase II work plan for the property addressing previous comments.

On April 18, 2008, the applicant submitted an updated Phase I for the property, and on May 5, 2008, the VCP determined that the Phase I did not comply with the American Society for Testing and Materials Phase I Standard and the submission did not include a Phase II work plan for additional investigation.

The Department issued a letter on July 15, 2008 that denied P&L Investments application and that a new application would be required for continuation in the VCP. On July 30, 2008, the applicant submitted a response to the VCP, but the submission lacked a new application and the Phase II Work Plan did not provide for proper characterization of the property. On August 29, 2008, the VCP indicated to the applicant that their work plan must be modified and a new application must be submitted for participation in the program.

In September 2008, the applicant requested an extension to submit the Phase II work plan, and on September 26, 2008, the VCP denied the request for an extension. On October 7, 2008, P&L Investments application to the VCP was withdrawn.

Planned or Potential Future Action

Since the withdrawal of the property from the VCP, the future use of the property is unknown.

Contact

For additional information, please contact the Land Restoration Program at (410) 537-3493.

Last Update: January 8, 2010