

BULK CHEMICALS, INC. SITE

COMMUNITY UPDATE | June 14, 2019

U.S. EPA Responds to Spill at Bulk Chemicals, Inc.

The Bulk Chemicals, Inc. Site is a chemical facility located on Mohrsville Road in Shoemakersville, Perry Township. On Sunday, June 9, the Berks County Emergency Management Agency and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) responded to a spill of nitric acid at the facility. On Monday morning, June 10, the Shoemakersville Fire Department responded to a fire on Site. Some local residents were asked to evacuate their homes to ensure their health and safety during these events. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) arrived on Site late Monday at the request of PADEP to provide assistance. Since arriving on the scene, EPA and PADEP have been coordinating with local agencies and Bulk Chemicals, Inc. (BCI) to assess conditions at the facility and are overseeing cleanup efforts being conducted by BCI and its contractors. EPA is also conducting air quality monitoring to ensure the safety of on-site workers and the nearby community.

What are the risks for local residents?

The nitric acid spill has been contained and is no longer a threat outside the BCI facility. EPA does not expect runoff from the spill to impact local drinking water wells or the Schuylkill River. To confirm they have not been impacted, EPA is currently planning to sample five residential drinking water wells in the immediate vicinity of the facility. Containers of other chemicals stored and used at the facility were impacted by the spill and fire, but EPA does not consider these an immediate threat to residents. Since beginning monitoring on Tuesday, June 11, air quality outside the facility continues to be safe for residents.

What Are The Next Steps?

Efforts are underway to clean up the nitric acid spill. Cleanup of the exterior of the facility has been conducted. Current cleanup efforts are focused inside the impacted building. EPA will continue to coordinate with PADEP and work with BCI to assess and stabilize damaged containers stored inside the building to reduce the threat of further release. Until conditions are stabilized, EPA will be conducting continuous air monitoring both within the facility and around the perimeter to ensure that air quality is protected for workers and local residents. EPA appreciates the community's continued cooperation and patience as cleanup efforts continue.

What Can I Expect?

- Closure of Mohrsville Road for 1-4 weeks.
- EPA workers and contractors in and around the BCI facility, dressed in personal protective equipment, for 1-4 weeks.
- Increased noise, truck traffic, and equipment on Mohrsville Road.
- Continuous air monitoring by the EPA to ensure the health and safety of workers and local residents.
- EPA will coordinate with local officials and provide updates to the community.



QUESTIONS? Contact Us!

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