

BULK CHEMICALS, INC. SITE

COMMUNITY UPDATE | June 21, 2019

U.S. EPA continues response oversight 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 Shoemakersville Fire Company, Berks County Department of Emergency Services 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 Company returned to respond to a fire in the building where the nitric acid was released. 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 site stabilization and 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 is going on at the Site?

The response team has contained the nitric acid spill. The cleanup of the exterior has been completed, and current efforts are focused inside the impacted building. Some chemical containers inside the facility were damaged by the acid spill and fire. The response team is focused on stabilizing these chemicals by transferring them to new containers. While the team continues to make progress, there are still many containers of chemicals inside the facility. Until conditions are stable, EPA will conduct continuous air monitoring both within the facility and around the perimeter to ensure that air quality is protected for workers and local residents. Since the monitoring began on Tuesday, June 11, air quality outside the facility continues to be safe for residents. EPA also sampled five residential drinking water wells in the immediate vicinity of the facility and is currently awaiting the test results. Based on these results, EPA will decide whether further sampling is needed.

What can I expect?

- Closure of Mohrsville Road (except local traffic) for 1-4 more weeks.
- EPA workers and contractors in and around the BCI facility, dressed in personal protective equipment, for 1-4 more 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.
- Coordination between EPA, PADEP, and local officials with updates to the community.

QUESTIONS? Contact Us!



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