

BULK CHEMICALS, INC. SITE

COMMUNITY UPDATE | **June 28, 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 on June 10 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?

Since the last update, the response team has made significant progress to stabilize conditions at the BCI facility. The response team transferred chemicals from the containers that were damaged by the spill and fire to new containers. The response team is now focused on the cleanup and safe disposal of the damaged containers and waste. Upcoming work includes transferring the remaining nitric acid from temporary storage containers to permanent containers. EPA will continue to 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. Preliminary sampling results showed no impact from the spill to these drinking water wells.

What can I expect?

- Partial or full closure of Mohrsville Road (except local traffic) for 1-3 more weeks.
- EPA workers and contractors in and around the BCI facility, dressed in personal protective equipment, for 1-3 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!

Meg Keegan | EPA Community Involvement Coordinator

215-814-5494 | keegan.megan@epa.gov

