

Building Federal Partnerships to Harness Long Term Success: A Case Study from the EPA/USCG Partnership During Cleanup of Michigan Chemical Factories

LTJG Kathleen Dillon

United States Coast Guard, Atlantic Strike Team

Michner Plating Facility- Jackson, Michigan

EPA Region V OSC Jeff Kimble originally requested Atlantic Strike Team support in September 2015 for onsite safety, contractor oversight, and air monitoring. Later in the project, the AST provided additional personnel and pumping equipment to pump out a 40,000 gallon vat of cyanide. EPA Region V's ability to work with Coast Guard and AST to accomplish work onsite saved government significant costs, allowing other Superfund projects to be accomplished with money saved at Michner.



Hard Chrome Plating – Grand Rapids, Michigan

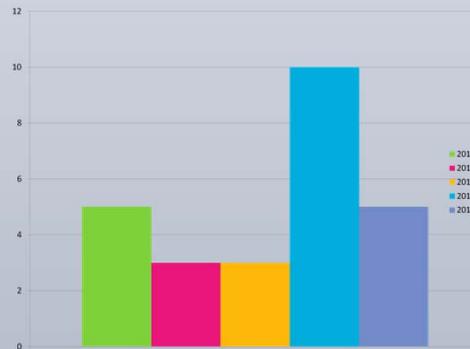
EPA Region V OSC Betsy Nightingale requested Strike Team support with site safety and contractor oversight. On scene, Strike Team members created an extensive decontamination area to eliminate cross contamination from responders leaving the exclusion zone. They also performed hazardous categorization of chemicals inside the facility and revised the Site Safety Plan to include safety measures specific to these chemicals.



Abstract

In the fall of 2015, the Coast Guard's Atlantic Strike Team (AST) was requested by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 5 to provide response operations at two abandoned chemical plating factories in Michigan. Starting in October 2015, the AST provided three months of air monitoring and chemical pumping operation support at the Michner Chemical Plating Factory in Jackson, Michigan. Shortly after operations began at Michner, EPA Region 5 requested additional AST support with hazardous material categorization and contractor monitoring at the Hard Chrome Plating facility in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Both abandoned chemical facilities were in close proximity to schools, residential neighborhoods, and community spaces.

EPA/Atlantic Strike Team Cases 2012-2016



Conclusions

- If strong working relationships already exist amongst federal partners when an emergency such as an oil spill or natural disaster occurs, a more efficient and effective response is possible.
- Superfund projects have allowed the USCG and EPA to develop a strong working relationship that has paid large dividends during emergency responses.
- The EPA and USCG should be encouraged to continue to use each other's personnel and resources in creative ways.

Additional Information

Detailed descriptions and situation reports for EPA CERCLA projects can be found at: www.epaosc.org

National Strike Force website:

www.uscg.mil/hq/nsfweb

Author Contact Information

LTJG Kathleen Dillon

Kathleen.e.dillon@uscg.mil