

Regional Response Team (RRT) Annual Report

Region:	2	Calendar Year:	2020
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A. Annual Meetings

	Dates	Location	# of Attendees	Website for presentations
1.	3/9-10/2020	Staatsburg, NY	43	http://www.nrt.org/RRT2March2020
2.				No additional meetings were held in 2020 due to COVID-19
3.				

B. Activations / Notifications

1.	Dates:	2/28-7/30	Event:	Care Environmental Facility; Hackettstown, NJ	ACT	NOT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Issue / Concern:	On February 28, 2020, the NRC received a report of approximately 6,000 improperly stored drums and containers at the Care Environmental warehouse in Lumberton, North Carolina. A Region 4 EPA OSC responded to the Site at the request of NCDEQ and began assessment and PRP identification activities. During those activities, EPA received information from a former Care Environmental employee of another facility owned by Care Environmental, located in Hackettstown, NJ. EPA Region 4 provided EPA Region 2 with this information.					
	Agencies Involved:	EPA, NJDEP, Warren County Fire Marshal, Warren County Hazmat					
	Decisions Made:	<p>The Warren County Fire Marshal along with Warren County Hazmat, NJDEP and two EPA OSCs visited the facility on March 2. Approximately 250 55-gallon steel and poly drums and 50 cubic yard boxes of waste were located within the warehouse facility. The containers were haphazardly stored, incompatible materials were stored improperly and several of the containers were observed to be leaking. Manifest information obtained from the company indicated several CERCLA hazardous substances were stored on-site including acetone, mercury, sodium hypochlorite, calcium hypochlorite, and potassium hydroxide. Manifest information also indicated compressed gases, flammable liquids, flammable solids, oxidizing liquids and solids, organic peroxides, toxic liquids, corrosive liquids and solids and pesticides were stored on-site. The threat of fire was significant, the Fire Marshall determined the building was unsafe for occupancy and stated fire resources would not respond to the location in the event of a fire. The Fire Marshal gave the company owner 24 hours to remove all drums and containers from the building because of the improper storage, lack of fire suppression, and other violations of the fire code. NJDEP issued the company owner a directive to begin removal operations immediately. The Warren County Fire Marshal revisited the site at 1500 on March 3, 2020 and shut down the entire building for failure to comply with the order.</p> <p>The owner of Care Environmental hired Environmental Enterprises, Inc. (EEI) to remove and dispose of the materials on-site. After shipping two loads on March 11, EEI discontinued work on March 12 due to lack of payment from the PRP. Approximately 4-5 trailer loads of waste remained on-site. While working with the PRP to ensure funding would be provided to continue the removal of the materials, the Governor of NJ issued a state-wide stop work order due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the time period of April through July, EPA continued to reach out to the PRP to determine if he had secured funding to complete the removal of materials from the facility once safe to do so. EPA's efforts to reach the PRP went unanswered. On July 17, Warren County Hazmat informed</p>					

		EPA they had visited the facility, spoke with the owner and observed the current conditions at the facility. The majority of materials had been removed, with the exception of several cubic yard boxes of fluorescent light bulbs and some miscellaneous drummed material. The remaining material was removed from the facility on July 30 under the supervision of Warren County Hazmat and NJDEP Bureau of Hazardous Waste Enforcement. Therefore, on July 30, it was determined by EPA and the Unified Command that the emergency at the Site had been stabilized.			
2.	Dates:	8/4-11/5	Event:	Abandoned Chemicals; Dix Hills, NY.	ACT <input type="checkbox"/> NOT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Issue / Concern:	EPA's Criminal Investigation Division (CID) received a third-party complaint about drums of chemicals abandoned at 277 Pine Acre Blvd in Dix Hills, NY. The property owner was incarcerated at the time for wire fraud. During a reconnaissance visit to the property, CID observed multiple 55-gallon drums and smaller containers, some of which were labeled denatured alcohol, which is a flammable liquid. CID referred the site to EPA's Superfund and Emergency Management Division (SEMD) on August 4.			
	Agencies Involved:	EPA			
	Decisions Made:	<p>On October 7, the EPA OSC visited the property with the property owner's designated representative and observed 25 55-gallon drums and two 250-gallon totes in the driveway. The majority of the drums contained shower gel, glycerine, sorbital, unscented conditioner, coconut oil, and super-sweet (used for electronic cigarette flavoring). One drum contained denatured alcohol (ethyl alcohol-d4) and was less than half full. In the backyard behind the workshop, there were a large amount of new, empty containers used in the retail cosmetic business. Mixed in with these boxes were one pallet of miscellaneous chemicals (including flammables, caustics and corrosives) and approximately 28 5-gallon deteriorated metal containers of flammable liquids.</p> <p>On October 29, EPA received a verbal authorization from the property owner to conduct a removal action, since he allegedly did not have the resources, nor was he in a position to do so while incarcerated. On November 5, EPA and ERRS mobilized to the site with a subcontractor ACV Enviro who grouped the containers into appropriate categories for transportation and disposal. The containers were lab packed or shrink wrapped on a pallet for transportation and disposal. The property owner's designated representative was present on site to observe the operations. All equipment and crew were demobilized from the site on November 5.</p>			
3.	Dates:	28Sep20	Event:	YM MANDATE – Low Sulfur Fuel Oil Spill	ACT <input type="checkbox"/> NOT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Issue / Concern:	Potential impact to natural resources and to both inland and coastal zones.			
	Agencies Involved:	EPA R2, USCG Sector New York, NJ DEP, DOC – NOAA, DOI - USFWS			
	Decisions Made:	USCG took lead and acted as FOSC for this incident and consulted NOAA/USFWS regarding potential impacts to natural resources.			
4.	Dates:	16MAR21	Event:	Gasoline leak	ACT <input type="checkbox"/> NOT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Issue / Concern:	Potential impact to natural resources and to both inland and coastal zones.			
	Agencies Involved:	EPA R2, USCG Sector New York, NJ DEP, DOC – NOAA, DOI - USFWS			
	Decisions Made:	USCG took lead and acted as FOSC for this incident and consulted NOAA/USFWS regarding potential impacts to natural resources. Excavation crews fitted for respirators due to high benzene levels.			

C. RRT Exercises – No RRT exercises during the period of this report.					
1.	Dates:		Event:		
	Agencies Involved:				
	Summary of exercise:				

D. Changes in RRT Leadership

Agency	Outgoing Personnel	Incoming personnel
1) EPA Region 2	EPA Co-Chair Eric Mosher passed away on August 22, 2020	Doug Kodama and Shawna Hoppe, serving details as Acting Branch Chief, were EPA RRT Co-Chairs.
2)		
3)		

E. Best Practices and Lessons Learned by the RRT (which may help other RRTs)

USCG and EPA interactions work best using Microsoft Teams. The USCG is not permitted to use Zoom for any information being exchanged above For Official Use Only.

F. Federal, State, and Local Planning and Coordination Efforts

The Region 2 Regional Contingency Plan (RCP) was updated and posted on the RRT2 website in December 2020.

The “RRT2 Guidance on National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Compliance During Emergency Response” was finalized and added to the R2 RCP as Appendix 10 in December 2020.

Executive Order 13650 Continued Coordination: EPA, DHS and OSHA continue to share facility-specific information in accordance with each agency’s requirements, policies, and procedures. EPA shares such information on an as-needed basis with federal, state, and local partners. EPA recently conducted a General Duty Clause inspection at the Fiabila USA Inc. facility located in Linden, NJ. The facility was referred to the Prevention Section by DHS and OSHA due to a small explosion at the facility. EPA provided a copy of the inspection report to DHS and OSHA. EPA is currently comparing DHS, NJDEP and EPA inventory data on facilities that use and store nitrocellulose in New Jersey to identify potential inspection candidates.

G. Challenges and Issues (and Operational Requirements Which May Require NRT Attention)

A common virtual portal remains a challenge to host virtual meetings across all levels of government, mainly due to IT restrictions. Agencies vary amongst returning to the workplace given the constraints for their employees, as well as availability of vaccines.

In November 2018, RRTs 1 and 2 sent a letter to the NRT, requesting NRT efforts to enhance the nationwide availability of information for the planning, preparedness and response to spills of dielectric, synthetic and mineral insulating oils. The region continued to receive notifications for spills of these oils in 2020, and requests that the NRT continue to pursue this issue at the national level.