

950 Rittenhouse Road Commodore Superfund Site

Then:

The site was operated as a computer chip manufacturing facility from 1970 to 1993 by Commodore Business Machines. Waste solvents were stored in an underground concrete storage tank on site and then an unlined steel tank. Inspections conducted by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection indicated that both tanks leaked. Commodore performed several response actions beginning in 1981, including soils excavation and groundwater recovery from a contaminated well. Air strippers have been in use since 1984 to remove the volatile solvents from the groundwater.

Now:

Ongoing remediation of the site has decreased groundwater contaminant concentrations by up to 98%, with 7 of 13 monitoring locations currently at or within drinking water standards. Pumping rates have been decreased during recent years. A test of plume stability with the recovery wells turned off was initiated in December 2014. The test results over the last two years indicate that the extent of the contaminant plume is stable to decreasing without the recovery wells being pumped. A new treatment system to target a localized area of residual solvent contamination that remains in the shallow bedrock beneath a portion of the building will become operational in April 2017.

Additional Background:

The site was proposed to the National Priorities List, requiring long-term remedial action on January 22, 1987 and was formally added to the list in 1989. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a unilateral administrative order (UAO) in 1993 to Commodore Business Machines and Allen-Bradley Corporation to carry out the site remediation work. Only Allen-Bradley Corporation (now part of Rockwell Automation) has complied with the order. Commodore Business Machines went bankrupt. The order included providing access to the public drinking water supply to local residents that had been on private wells and the design, installation, and operation of a groundwater extraction and treatment system.

- The public water supply pipeline extension and laterals to the residences were completed in 1997. The connection of the residences and the closing of the residential wells began in January 1998.
- Construction of the groundwater extraction and treatment system began in the fall of 1999 and was started up in August 2000. It was anticipated that the treatment may operate for more than 30 years.

In 2001, Rockwell Automation initiated additional voluntary work to enhance and speed up the groundwater treatment. This enhanced treatment (ET) included the installation of a vapor extraction system to remove chemical vapors from the soil and bedrock, and chemical oxidation to treat residual contaminant levels in soil and perched water near and beneath the former CSG building. Rockwell continues to coordinate with EPA and PADEP to accelerate cleanup.

More information is available at:

<https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csitinfo.cfm?id=0301146>

Through March 2016, the on-site groundwater recovery system had pumped and treated approximately 277 million gallons of water and recovered 488 pounds of contamination. The additional enhanced treatments performed by Rockwell treated an estimated 1,152 pounds of contaminants.