

Latex Spill on Delaware River (March 24, 2023) Drinking Water Response



What happened?

- At 11:23 pm Friday March 24, 2023, NRC received a report of a release of approximately 90,000 lbs of an acrylic polymer from the Trinseo/Altuglas facility in Bristol, Bucks County, PA. Local and neighboring facility hazmat teams responded. PA DEP also responded.
- Product initially entered secondary containment on site, the product did reach Otter Creek and eventually the Delaware River.

Jurisdiction

- The incident is in USCG Federal OSC jurisdiction. The EPA duty officer was in contact with the facility, USCG, and PADEP throughout the night and through the weekend to offer EPA support if needed.
- EPA encouragement of USCG to push RP to act
- USCG offered boat to assist with sample collection on the river at intakes and near discharge. EPA Contractor collected samples. RP transported and paid for analysis at Eurofins

Product and Parameters of Concern

- The product dilutes in water but is visible on surface waters. The spilled material is described as a milky white substance and is non-flammable.

Analyte	ATSDR Reference Concentration / Screening Level (ppb)	Potential Health Effects
Butyl Acrylate	560	Irritation eyes, skin, upper respiratory system; sensitization dermatitis; dyspnea (breathing difficulty)
Ethyl Acrylate	14 (ingestion/dermal/inhalation) 100 (ingestion only)	Irritation eyes, skin, respiratory system; [potential occupational carcinogen]
Methyl Methacrylate	9,800	Irritation eyes, skin, nose, throat; dermatitis

As Events started to unfold

Latex Spill - notification from Delaware Valley EWS;

- Call from EPA OSC was helpful to alert and invite to a call with Utilities and PADEP on a Saturday afternoon.
- Participated in several calls over the weekend and into Monday as well as separate calls with PADEP
- PADEP emergency response personnel onsite; also led calls with utilities
- Some calls included chemist from RP

Latex Spill on Delaware River





Intake from the Delaware River at one of our treatment plants in northeast Philadelphia.

DW Response Actions during the Spill

- Conference calls with emergency responders including EPA-SEMD, States and with utilities (Big picture = saves time/page)
- Technical support on drinking water plant operations and Safe Drinking Water Act regulatory requirements
- When spill chemicals are NOT regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act, coordinate with ATSDR on reference concentrations/screening levels to inform water suppliers, federal, state and local officials
- Check DW tools - WCIT, Treatability database,

More DW Response Actions

- Reviewed sampling plans -- but EPA will refrain from creating if it isn't our lead

(where sampling is to occur--river, throughout the DWTP, finished water; when and at what frequency, what the results will dictate in terms of more sampling)

- Program can sample finished water, not on river
- Reviewed/Advised on public notification plans and text

EPA DW Program/Lab/WARN Roles

- EPA staff attended all calls with 4 utilities, led by PADEP
- EPA Regional laboratory was not involved but later confirmed correct analysis method was used due to concern for all river and DWTP results being ND
- OSC and contractor collected river samples, RP transported to Edison NJ and paid for analysis
- During the Latex Spill, **AQUA** volunteered use of their laboratory to perform analyses for the other utilities
- WARN network was NOT officially activated, and not necessary for utilities to support each other
- Utilities discussed their notification plans for consistency



**Thank you for allowing
me to join the DWSSP
program meeting**



QUESTIONS?