

AVTEX

In brief

Final funding for the demolition of Avtex site buildings has been approved by Congress.

The Front Royal Avtex plant was at one time the largest producer of rayon in the world and was crucial to the war effort in World War II and space efforts in the 1970s and 1980s.

If you have suggestions for future articles, comments on the newsletter or questions about the Avtex site, please contact FMC Site Manager Doug Bement at 540-635-3341.

Visit
www.avtexfibers.com

For more site information

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Army Corps funding authorized

On October 9, Congress passed the 2005 Department of Defense authorization bill giving the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers final authorization to spend an additional \$5 million on the demolition of Avtex site buildings.

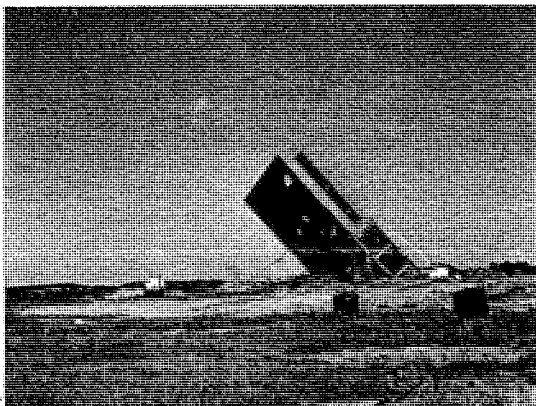
This approval, which provides the remaining funds needed for the work, will allow the Corps to take down the powerhouse complex (PHC), the final section of buildings on the Avtex site slated for demolition.

Senator John Warner and Representative Frank Wolf were instrumental in securing authorization. The final \$5 million for the Avtex demolition work was included in last year's energy and water spending bill; however, Congress needed to enact a separate authorization for the funds to actually be released for the site.

"This authorization represents a major milestone in the project," said Al Opstal, the Army Corps project manager for Avtex. "Now that Congress has provided the final piece of

bly the huge powerhouse complex."

Asbestos abatement work is already underway at the PHC using funds previously authorized by Congress. During the site's 50-year life as an operating rayon plant, the complex served as a central energy plant generating both heat and electricity for the entire factory. At the center of the complex is a five-story boiler house, by far the most massive structure on the 440-acre site. Once the abatement work is concluded in the PHC, the Avtex site will be free of the asbestos hazard.



Another portion of the buildings topple to make way for redevelopment.

funding, we can continue the work without delay and complete our assignment to remove all asbestos materials and buildings from the Avtex Plant, most nota-

The Army Corps, U.S. EPA and FMC Corporation are closely coordinating work activities within the former plant buildings. FMC is

See Funding on page 2

Work on cleanup plan progressing

In March of this year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) selected a cleanup plan for the next phase of work to be conducted at the Avtex Fibers Superfund site. The cleanup plan, formally known as the Record of Decision (ROD) Operable Unit 10, sets out an approach for addressing impacted soil around former plant buildings and for closing

a former solid waste landfill and eight waste viscose disposal basins.

The plan also calls for the eventual demolition of the site wastewater treatment plant. The ROD is designed to protect public health and the environment and to ensure that the areas included in the plan will be safe and

appropriate for future redevelopment.

"This cleanup plan and its upcoming implementation puts us another step closer towards creating a Site that the Economic Development Authority can redevelop and make an integral part of the Front Royal community," said

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Funding

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responsible for certain materials in the buildings that are covered under the Superfund cleanup. FMC has now substantially completed the Superfund work within the PHC. Once the Corps completes the asbestos abatement in the beginning of 2005, the complex will be ready for demolition.

Earlier this year, the Corps completed asbestos abatement in an area designated as sections 5, 6 and 7 – approximately 15 acres of buildings surrounding the PHC. This work focused on more than 20 separate structures, including former process buildings, the site laboratory and several industrial shops.

The Corps has already completed most of this work, and expects to finish the demolition of these sections by the end

of 2004. The ongoing Army Corps work, which is not part of the Superfund cleanup of the site, is being conducted under Congressional appropriations secured by U.S. Senator John Warner and Congressman Frank Wolf.

Once Site buildings are demolished, the Corps separates the debris so it can be properly addressed. For instance, steel beams are cut into pieces and transported off the site to be recycled. Concrete, stone and brick are sorted by size and then tested for any residual compounds to make sure they can be appropriately re-used on the site. These materials are being used as clean fill and as a road base for site roadways. To date, the Corps has not had to ship any debris materials off-site for disposal.

To assist in the source separation when the massive PHC is demolished, the Corps will temporarily leave some slabs

in place from the section 5, 6 and 7 buildings. This approach will make it easier to separate and address all the construction debris generated when the complex comes down.

Demolition of the former plant buildings will make way for the planned redevelopment of the eastern half of the site as a 175-acre business park. Once the powerhouse complex is demolished, the only site structure left on this half of the property will be the former Avtex Administration Building. The 18,000 square-foot Administration Building was rehabilitated by EDA, and now houses the EDA offices. The building will also be the home of a planned cultural heritage resources center, and will provide commercial rental space.

Cleanup plan

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Bonnie Gross, EPA Project Manager for the Avtex Superfund Site.

FMC Corporation, a former owner of the site, is responsible for performing the cleanup actions and is coordinating overall site activities with U.S. EPA and the Commonwealth of Virginia. As described in the May 2004 issue of the *Avtex Dispatch*, the ROD requires the following actions:

The New Landfill and eight viscose basins are to be covered with at least two feet of soil, graded for proper drainage and erosion control, and planted with vegetation. The covers will undergo regular monitoring, inspections and maintenance to make sure they continue to satisfy environmental requirements. In conjunction with other elements of the overall project, FMC will construct and operate a system that will collect and treat any water that may leach from the landfill or viscose basins.

The soil around former plant buildings will be sampled and analyzed for the potential pres-

ence of contamination. Any soils exceeding the cleanup levels specified in the ROD will be removed, and depending on the contaminant level, either used as fill under covers of the sulfate basins or shipped to an approved, off-site landfill for proper disposal. This area will then be graded to prepare for the planned redevelopment of the property, and replanted for erosion control.

The wastewater treatment plant, which treated process wastewater while the plant was active, has remained in operation throughout the site cleanup process. When no longer needed for cleanup, the wastewater buildings will be decontaminated and demolished.

"These response activities represent a major portion of the remaining Superfund work to be conducted at the site," said Doug Bement, FMC site manager. "This is a significant milestone in the cleanup process, and is the result of years of hard work and cooperation between FMC and the environmental agencies."

In order to ensure that the response activities required in the ROD are imple-

mented safely and appropriately, a comprehensive planning and design process is underway. FMC is developing the additional technical and design plans that are needed to implement the ROD. The first of these, known as the work plan, is a detailed document that specifies how the response activities will be conducted. FMC began characterizing Plant Area Soils in October 2003 and will use the results to prepare a remedial design work plan. EPA has approved the work plan for the New Landfill and Viscose Basins 1-8. Next, FMC will begin to create the actual design plans and drawings for the prescribed response activities.

Each design plan and drawing set must be reviewed and approved by EPA before work can begin. Pending final EPA approval of all plans and design drawings, work on these response activities is expected to start in 2005. With the exception of the demolition of the wastewater treatment plant, FMC should have these response activities substantially completed by the end of 2006. The wastewater treatment plant will continue to operate until EPA determines that the plant is no longer needed.



Multi-Stakeholders' Group Meeting—April 5, 2005

ALL ARE WELCOME...GET INVOLVED!

DATE: Tuesday, April 5, 2005

TIME: 6:30 p.m. — 7:00 p.m. -
Registration and Refreshments

7:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.
MSG Meeting

PLACE: Warren County Government
Center Board Room

220 North Commerce Avenue
Front Royal, Virginia

PROPOSED AGENDA

Multi-Stakeholders' Group Meeting

- Exit Report—Avtex Redevelopment Advisory Committee
- Site Cleanup—FMC
- Site Redevelopment—EDA
- Public Questions and Comments

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Front Royal-Warren County Economic Development Authority (EDA) and FMC Corporation encourage and welcome public participation and input for the cleanup and redevelopment of the Avtex Fibers Superfund Site.

For Further Information, please contact one of the following:

Megan Dougherty, EPA
(800) 553-2509

Tom Modena, DEQ
(804) 698-4883

Paul Carroll, EDA
(540) 635-2182

Robert Carr
Carr Marketing
Communications, Inc.
FMC Community Relations
716-831-1500

Al Opstal
U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
(757) 441-7536

Or check the Avtex
Fibers website at:

www.avtexfibers.com

We look forward to seeing you there!

Skyline SoccerPlex moves forward

With funding and leadership from a public-private partnership, grading and preparation work for new soccer fields is underway on an area of the former Avtex site. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Warren County, the Town of Front Royal, the Economic Development Authority, the U.S. Soccer Foundation and FMC Corporation are cooperating with local soccer supporters to benefit the Front Royal community. This effort is part of a national program between U.S. EPA and the U.S. Soccer Foundation to build recreational fields at former manufacturing and industrial sites.

"We are all very excited that the Skyline SoccerPlex project is moving forward," said Doug Stanley, Warren County Administrator. "Thanks to the combined efforts of all the partners, including recent additional funding approved by the Board

of Supervisors, we will be able to provide a new home for soccer in Warren County."

The area where the Skyline SoccerPlex will be built is on approximately 33 acres at the southern end of the property and is commonly known as Ed Stump Park. FMC is currently performing clearing and grading activities to allow for the construction of the first four of a planned seven fields. Once the grading activities are completed, a qualified sports field construction firm will build the fields under an approved design plan.

Warren County, the Town of Front Royal, the U.S. Soccer Foundation and the Front Royal Soccer Association are providing funding to build the soccer fields. Field construction is scheduled to begin

early next year, and should be substantially complete by the summer of 2005. The new turf will need several months to properly grow in, and the soccer fields should be ready for play in the spring of 2006.

Though this area is part of the Avtex property, it was never used for manufacturing activities. Soil testing conducted by FMC under a plan approved by U.S. EPA demonstrates that this area is safe and appropriate for soccer fields. Earlier this year, FMC properly removed some old building tiles containing non-friable asbestos from this area. The work occurred under a plan approved by U.S. EPA.

Shenandoah Center for Heritage and the Environment

Since its creation in 2002, the Shenandoah Center for Heritage and the Environment (SCHE) has been engaged in carving out a new historical center for the preservation and interpretation of the history of the Avtex site and of its place in the community. This process brings together technology with skills of historians, anthropologists, archaeologists, paper trackers and writers.

The first step was to compile as much of the plant's operational record as possible, in the face of the approaching demolition of the offices, laboratories, production facilities, and buildings. Since the demolition deadline was very short, this part of the process had to move rapidly. By November 2002, approximately 34,245 cubic feet of materials had been collected. One benefit of this phase was the opportunity to donate more than \$100,000 worth of laboratory glassware to the Warren County School System for science programs.

Since it would not be possible to retain everything, the second step was to determine which materials could be salvaged and would be useful for display and interpretation or research. At this point roughly 35% was identified as not having long-term usefulness. Approximately 22,830 cubic feet of remaining material was then transferred to the Center's temporary site at the Old Virginia warehouse.

The third step, which has been underway since 2001, is the recording of oral histories of those who worked at or were involved with the plant during its years of operations. These histories, which will eventually be transcribed, provide richness and color to the story.

The fourth step involves sorting and organizing the materials. Photographs are being gathered, engineering drawings are being organized, artifacts are being preserved, and business records are being sorted, so that eventually it will be possible to tell the story of the plant and

its role in Front Royal, Warren County and the northern Shenandoah Valley.

Whereas once rayon was one of the most important fibers in the industrial world, its production has virtually disappeared from the United States. It made a major contribution to the winning of World War II, to the transition of more complex fibers, and to the technology of the space age. Our children, and succeeding generations, should have a way to learn about that part of their heritage from the people who lived the story. The SCHE hopes to contribute to the preservation of that legacy.

Basin Closures Update

Under a plan issued by EPA in 1999, FMC has nearly completed the closure of approximately 66 acres of open basins on the site: 43 acres of sulfate basins and 23 acres of fly ash basins. The sulfate basins contain sludge generated when metal-bearing wastewater from the production process was treated with lime in the site's wastewater treatment plant. Fly ash is the residue that results from coal combustion. At Avtex, the fly ash generated by the on-site power plant was disposed of in four fly ash basins and one large stockpile. Fly ash from the stockpile has been used as fill material in several of the basin closures.

Approximately 50 acres of basins and the flyash stockpile area remain to be closed. For the time being, these basins are being kept open to aid in the management of site rainwater. Since other areas of the site have yet to be permanently addressed, rainwater from the site may become impacted. As a precaution, all site rainwater is stored in these basins prior to being treated in the wastewater treatment plant. These basins will stay open for rainwater collection purposes until there is no longer a need to store and treat site runoff. At that point, the basins will be properly closed under EPA's 1999 plan. This work is expected to be completed in 2008.



Megan Dougherty
EPA Community
Involvement Coordinator
215-814-5534 or 1-800-553-2509



Robert Carr
Carr Marketing Communications, Inc.
Community Relations for FMC
716-831-1500, Ext. 306



Paul Carroll
EDA Executive Director
540-635-2182



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Norfolk District

Al Opstal
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Project Manager
757-441-7536



Tom Modena, VDEQ
Remedial Project Manager
804-698-4883
or 1-800-592-5482

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 5, 2005

Multi-Stakeholders Group Meeting
**PLACE: Warren County Government
Center**

**220 N. Commerce Avenue
Front Royal, VA 22630**

TIME: 6:30 p.m.—8 p.m.

Refreshments 6:30

Meeting 7:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

*Sponsored by the Axtex Redevelopment
Advisory Committee*

May 14, 2005

AVTEX Open House

PLACE: Axtex Administration

Building (EDA office)

400 Kendrick Lane

Front Royal, VA 22630

TIME: 12 noon—3 p.m.

*Sponsored by the Economic
Development Authority*

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