

Cabot Carbon/Koppers
Northwest 23rd Avenue and Main Street
Gainesville, Florida
County: Alachua
District: Northeast
Site Lead: EPA
Placed on National Priorities List: September 1, 1983
HWC # 007

Site Description and History

The Cabot Carbon Corporation (Cabot) site is located in Gainesville near the intersection of Northwest 23rd Avenue and North Main Street in Section 29, Township 09S, Range 20E at 29° 40' 41.4100" N, 82° 19' 36.0026" W. A facility for the destructive distillation of pine stumps existed on this 49 acre site from 1945 to 1965. During Cabot's operation, approximately 6,000 gallons of crude wood oil and pitch were generated daily. Process wastewater containing residual pine tar was discharged to unlined surface impoundments, and the accumulated tar was periodically scraped out and sold. The real property was subsequently sold to a local developer who drained the ponds and allowed phenolic contents to flow offsite through an adjacent 50 acre wetland and into a storm water ditch connecting with Springstead and Hogtown Creeks. Hogtown Creek traverses through the City of Gainesville and terminates at Haile Sink, some 14 miles away. The environmental damage to Hogtown creek following this incident was detectable for five miles downstream.

In the mid-1970s, the property was sold again to another developer who built the existing shopping complex onsite. During construction, the remaining pine tar sludges were mixed into the topsoil on the property. A storm water retention pond was built over the location of the former waste impoundments. Shortly thereafter, a dark-stained, malodorous phenolic leachate began to appear in ditch water along North Main Street.

The Koppers Corporation (Koppers) site is a former wood treating facility located on 82 acres immediately west of the former Cabot property. The facility operated from 1916 until December 2009, initially using creosote for the preserving of wood utility poles and timbers. Pentachlorophenol (PCP) and copper-chromium-arsenic (CCA) processes were later added, with CCA used exclusively after 1992. Two onsite lagoons were used to manage discharge of process waters. Based on aerial photos, the former North lagoon was active from approximately 1956 until the 1970s and the former South lagoon from 1943 or earlier until 1976. Both were closed, covered and graded. The more recently used CCA process was self-contained and did not generate wastewater. Investigations performed by Koppers in the 1980s revealed soil and groundwater contamination onsite. In March 2010, Beazer East, Inc. (Beazer) purchased the property from Koppers to facilitate Superfund remediation. Koppers plant decommissioning activities, demolition and offsite disposal of above ground structures including the CCA tanks and related equipment, and interim storm water control measures were completed in March 2011. Final site closure will be completed as part of the Superfund remedial action.

In 1985, the Department of Transportation (DOT) proposed to widen a portion of North Main Street, adjacent to the site, estimating that 4800 cubic yards of contaminated muck were unsuitable for roadbed material and needed to be removed. The Florida Department of Environmental Regulation (FDER, now DEP) identified feasible alternatives for disposal of the muck in its March 1986 “Assessment of Management Alternatives for North Main Street Muck – Gainesville, Florida.” In January 1991, DOT presented a conceptual road-widening plan to EPA and DEP. The agencies reiterated that road widening could be implemented with proper precautions. DOT performed additional soil sampling adjacent to and beneath North Main Street in 1992 to determine the extent of contaminated muck requiring excavation during road construction and support the road design. DOT completed the widening of North Main Street adjacent to the site in September 1994. Excavated soils were transported to an out-of-state facility for treatment and disposal.

Threat

Soil contamination has been confirmed at the former Koppers facility at concentrations above levels protective of both commercial/industrial and residential use. Contaminants include arsenic, chromium, PCP, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and dioxin. Exposed soils on the former Cabot facility are not contaminated above levels protective for unrestricted residential use.

Groundwater contamination in the surficial, Hawthorn and Floridan aquifers at the former Koppers facility has been confirmed along with surficial aquifer groundwater contamination on and down gradient of the former Cabot facility. Contaminants include those associated with the wood preserving industry (PCP, creosote-related compounds as well as naphthalene, copper, chromium, and arsenic) and with the naval stores industry (terpenes, phenols) and benzene. The downward migration of contaminants poses a threat to the underlying Floridan aquifer, the primary source of area drinking water. Ongoing monitoring of onsite Floridan aquifer monitoring wells since 2004 has confirmed the presence of organic compounds, including naphthalene, at levels exceeding State groundwater criteria. May 2009 sampling results confirmed naphthalene at 120 µg/L and 36 µg/L (versus 14 µg/L State criteria) in two Floridan aquifer monitoring wells located at the north and east facility property boundaries, respectively. A recovery well was installed in May 2010 and pumping is ongoing to address Floridan groundwater contamination at the northwest property boundary. Interim pumping of two existing monitoring wells is ongoing in the east and central area of the site. Monitoring of the existing array of offsite Floridan “sentinel” monitoring wells located approximately 800 feet north of the site has not shown concentrations above State groundwater criteria for site related organic compounds, indicating that the Floridan aquifer contamination is limited to the vicinity of the site. Arsenic was detected at 15 µg/L (versus the 10 µg/L groundwater standard) in a new sentinel well installed and sampled in May 2010. Subsequent sampling results confirmed that arsenic had declined to 1.2 µg/L and remains below the State groundwater criteria. The Murphree well field is approximately 2.5 miles northeast of the site.

Migration of groundwater contamination to nearby private wells remains a concern. A survey of private wells in the area of the site was completed in 2003. Groundwater sampling of nearby

private wells in February 2004 detected contamination in one private irrigation well located immediately west of Koppers where benzene and naphthalene were observed at 1.7 and 15.3 µg/L respectively, above the State's 1.0 µg/L and 14 µg/L criteria. Subsequent sampling in April 2004 did not detect any exceedances. As instructed by the Water Management District, the unpermitted private well was plugged and abandoned in November 2004, in order to prevent exposure and a potential conduit for contaminant migration. Regular monitoring of nearby private potable wells by the Alachua County Health Department (ACHD) has confirmed that offsite private potable wells meet drinking water standards.

The potential for environmental damage from offsite migration and discharge of contaminated groundwater or storm water into the ditch north of the Cabot Carbon/Koppers site leading to Springstead Creek remains a concern. Following a 1983 treatability study completed in cooperation with the University of Florida, FDER used State funds to construct a leachate collection system in the Main Street ditch located immediately east of the site as an interim remedial measure (IRM). The IRM system was operated by FDER from 1985 until 1991, when the Cabot Carbon Corporation took over operation. Cabot Carbon Corporation installed the current groundwater interceptor trench in 1995 as part of the Superfund cleanup and to prevent discharge of contaminated water into Springstead Creek. Intercepted groundwater is sent to the Kanapaha Sewage Treatment Plant.

The onsite Koppers ditch conveys storm water offsite and ultimately to Springstead Creek. Excavation of contaminated sediments in the onsite storm water ditch was completed by the Koppers facility in 2009 in an effort to address the DEP storm water permit exceedances for arsenic and copper. However, storm water monitoring and Alachua County Environmental Protection Department (ACEPD) surface water sampling results in 2010 confirmed exceedances of surface water criteria for arsenic and PAHs. After Koppers closed the facility in 2010, Beazer submitted an application for a DEP storm water permit. In November 2010, under a consent order with DEP, Beazer implemented site improvements including grading, construction of berms and swales and site seeding/sodding to improve the quality of storm water discharge. DEP held a public meeting in March 2011 to present the draft storm water permit and solicit public comment. The interim permit was issued to Beazer in June 2011 and requires monitoring of facility specific constituents to determine compliance with storm water regulations and identify corrective actions, where necessary. The permit will remain in place until the Superfund remedy is implemented.

Public exposure to offsite soil and sediment contamination is a concern. DEP, ACEPD and the City of Gainesville representatives recommended that the EPA require offsite contaminated soils be identified and removed expeditiously. Offsite soil sampling in 2009 and 2010 west of the Koppers facility confirmed dioxin, arsenic and carcinogenic polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (cPAHs) in surface soils in the City easement and right-of-ways (ROW) bordering residential properties at concentrations above the State soil cleanup target levels (SCTLs) for unrestricted residential use. Follow up soil sampling on residential properties west of the Koppers facility in September 2010 confirmed concentrations above residential SCTLs, extending approximately 500 feet west of the site and approaching NW 6th Street in some areas. Concentrations above SCTLs have also been identified in right-of-way (ROW) soil samples collected immediately

south, east and north of the former Koppers facility. Soil sampling as part of an area-wide background study in Gainesville has shown elevated soil concentrations. The DEP does not have any information that links these background sample results to the Koppers site. The ACHD and DEP have issued notices to owners/residents of sampled properties and those located near ROW sample locations, advising that they avoid contact with contaminated soils.

Offsite sediment sampling was completed in early 2009 by the ACEPD through funding by EPA to determine if contaminated sediments have been transported offsite and pose a public health risk. The results indicate that there are sediments in Springstead and Hogtown Creeks with several PAH compounds at concentrations above the State sediment quality guidelines for the protection of sediment dwelling organisms. While not directly comparable, dioxin was also observed above the State unrestricted use soil criteria of 7 parts per trillion (ppt), at 4 sediment locations, with concentrations up to 41 ppt. Carcinogenic PAHs were detected above the State unrestricted use soil criteria of 0.1 mg/kg at 10 sediment locations, with levels up to 3.13 mg/kg. DEP issued written notices of offsite contamination to property owners near confirmed locations of sediment contamination. DEP with the assistance of ACEPD has posted warning signs at public access points along the creeks.

Public concern regarding potential offsite exposure to dust that may contain site-related contamination has also been expressed. Offsite soil contamination is believed to be primarily due to historic windblown dust from the Koppers facility property. Based on DEP facility inspections in 2009, modifications to Koppers facility operations including seeding and watering of more barren areas appeared to have addressed dust emissions. No dust violations of the Koppers facility permit were observed. Site improvements since closure of the facility have further reduced dust generation at the former facility. In 2011, EPA formed a work group with DOH/ATSDR, DEP, ACEPD and local stakeholders to address residents' concerns with potential exposure to indoor dust.

Response Strategy and Status (June 2011)

A complaint against Cabot Carbon Corporation and Raymond Tassinari was filed by FDER in July 1983 for violation of Florida Statutes and FDER rules. Although the Department requested civil penalties, injunctive relief and cost recovery, in June 1984 the court struck all motions except cost recovery. In 1987, the court ruled that a cost recovery hearing would not be implemented until completion of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS). DEP completed cost recovery against the responsible parties in 1995, recovering the majority of its incurred costs.

In December 1984, FDER entered into a Superfund Cooperative Agreement with EPA to conduct a RI/FS. The FDER contractor, IT Corporation, completed the RI fieldwork and provided a RI report to the Department that included recommendations for additional assessment. No additional assessment was completed under this contract. In April 1987, FDER held an informational meeting in Gainesville to present results in the draft RI report and answer questions. The final RI report was received in June 1987. Completion of the RI coincided with

the expiration of the EPA-FDER Cooperative Agreement. FDER turned over the lead management role to EPA in November 1987.

The EPA entered into a Consent Order with Cabot Carbon Corporation (Cabot), and Beazer, Inc. (formerly Koppers), requiring the responsible parties to perform the FS, including additional RI fieldwork. The final RI Addendum was issued in November 1989. The Risk Assessment was approved in February 1990. The final FS was approved in June 1990.

The RI confirmed that groundwater in the surficial aquifer, onsite soils at the Koppers' facility, and sediments and surface water in the North Main Street ditch and Springstead Creek contain elevated levels of site-related contaminants including arsenic, chromium, phenol, PCP, naphthalene, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and benzene. The risk assessment concluded that contaminant levels did not pose a health risk under current industrial/commercial land use practices, based on existing data at that time. While surface water in the North Main Street ditch did exceed the 1 µg/L surface water standard for phenol for the protection of surface water organisms, contaminant levels observed in ditch sediments and surface water did not pose a public health threat.

Following the August 1990 public meeting, the EPA signed the Record of Decision (ROD) documenting the selected site remedy. The selected remedy specified treatment of Koppers' contaminated soils by a combination of soil washing, bioremediation, and solidification/stabilization; and surficial aquifer groundwater recovery and treatment at both the Koppers and former Cabot facilities, with discharge to the local publicly owned treatment works (POTW). Soil cleanup criteria were selected based on future residential use and the protection of groundwater. Groundwater cleanup goals were health-based and assumed potential use as a drinking water source. Additional soil sampling was also required in a suspected lagoon area immediately west of North Main Street along with plugging of former Cabot production wells.

In March 1991, Cabot signed a Consent Order with EPA, agreeing to perform remedial design and cleanup. Beazer, Inc. agreed to perform remedial design and cleanup at the Koppers site in response to the EPA's administrative unilateral order.

Cabot performed additional soil sampling in the suspected former lagoon area west of North Main Street in 1992 and confirmed that previously unidentified soils immediately northeast of the former facility contained elevated levels of PAHs and naphthalene requiring remediation. Removal of these contaminated soils was incorporated into Cabot's final groundwater remedial design and approved by EPA in December 1993. DOT excavated and disposed of contaminated soil beneath and east of North Main Street during road construction. Construction of the Cabot groundwater interceptor trench began in January 1995 following completion of the DOT road widening and included removal of the remaining accessible contaminated soils west of the North Main Street ditch. Installation of the Cabot surficial aquifer remedial system along North Main Street was completed in May 1995. System operation and maintenance (O&M) is ongoing. Cabot conducted additional groundwater sampling to evaluate the effectiveness of the system in early 2009. No modifications to the Cabot surficial recovery system are proposed.

Using Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, Cabot performed additional fieldwork in the former clock tower area in 1998 and located the three Floridan aquifer wells utilized during former Cabot Carbon facility operations. The former supply wells were plugged and abandoned in 2000.

Construction of the Koppers surficial aquifer groundwater recovery and pretreatment system was completed in November 1994, following a groundwater and soil treatability study. Beazer conducted an evaluation of the Koppers surficial groundwater remedial system in December 2006; followed by more widespread sampling of surficial aquifer monitoring wells in 2007. Based on those results, in 2009, Beazer expanded the Koppers groundwater recovery system to include deep trenches for collection of onsite surficial groundwater and dense non-aqueous phase liquid (DNAPL) contamination. Operation and maintenance of the Koppers surficial aquifer remedial system is ongoing.

Sampling to support design of the 1990 selected Superfund remedy indicated that a much larger volume of soil contamination might exist at the Koppers facility along with DNAPL contamination in the surficial aquifer. Additional DNAPL assessment and re-evaluation of the site remedy was conducted by Beazer and documented in the September 1999 Revised Supplemental FS. The EPA provided a separate FS Addendum with further evaluation of cleanup alternatives in April 2001.

In May 2001, the EPA held a public meeting to present the Agency's proposed plan for an amended soil remedy. The proposed remedy consisted of an impermeable cap and underground slurry wall to contain contaminated soil and the underlying DNAPL creosote contamination in the surficial aquifer. The Gainesville Commission formally opposed the proposed containment remedy, citing concerns that the underlying Hawthorn clays were not adequate to prevent contaminant migration into the underlying Hawthorn formation and Floridan aquifer. DEP expressed similar concerns and indicated that offsite soil sampling should also be completed to determine if site-related contamination, including dioxin, was present in the adjacent neighborhood.

The EPA instructed Beazer to conduct additional fieldwork at the Koppers site to determine the continuity of the underlying Hawthorn clays, the extent of contamination, and the feasibility of the proposed containment remedy. Assessment activities from 2001 to 2010 have included: a) installation and monitoring of additional onsite wells in the surficial aquifer, upper and lower Hawthorn formation and upper Floridan Aquifer; b) DNAPL assessment including coring in or near the 4 onsite source areas; c) completion of a private well survey and sampling of offsite private potable wells west and north of the site; d) installation of offsite Hawthorn monitoring wells east and west of the Koppers property; e) additional onsite soil sampling and; f) offsite soil sampling north, south, east and west of the Koppers property. As of January 2010, 38 Hawthorn and 33 Floridan Aquifer monitoring wells including 19 multi-level Floridan wells and 4 offsite "sentinel" Floridan wells had been installed at the Koppers site. Three additional Floridan monitoring wells and a Floridan recovery well were installed in the northwest part of the Koppers property along with 2 more offsite Floridan sentinel wells in May 2010.

Data presented in 2002 through 2004 Field Investigation Reports, the 2006 through 2010 Floridan Aquifer Well Installations reports, the March 2008 Supplemental Hawthorn Group Investigation report and ongoing groundwater monitoring results have confirmed that contaminants including phenolic compounds and creosote related compounds (PAHs and naphthalene) have migrated from the surficial aquifer into the underlying Hawthorn formation and upper Floridan aquifer, at depths up to approximately 285 feet below land surface (bls). Sampling of ten (10) monitoring wells installed in the Hawthorn formation east of the Koppers property has confirmed offsite groundwater contamination in the Upper and Lower Hawthorn with naphthalene up to 3,300 µg/L in one Upper Hawthorn well. Two Hawthorn monitoring wells north of the former Cabot facility property have also shown significant concentrations of phenolic compounds above State groundwater standards as well as terpenes. Organic compounds have been detected in 8 onsite upper Floridan aquifer monitoring wells at concentrations above State groundwater criteria, with naphthalene observed at concentrations up to 2,600 µg/L in an onsite Floridan monitoring well near the former North Lagoon source area.

Separate groundwater models developed by Beazer and Gainesville Regional Utility's (GRU) consultants have estimated a broad range of possible timeframes whereby the Floridan groundwater contamination might reach the Murphree well field. Monitoring of the 6 offsite Floridan Aquifer "sentinel" monitoring wells located north of the Koppers facility is ongoing to ensure that if groundwater contaminant migration occurs, it is detected and addressed before it threatens the well field. To date, quarterly sampling indicates that site-related groundwater contamination has not migrated to these sentinel wells and that Floridan aquifer contamination is limited in extent.

In 2004, Beazer provided an evaluation of possible interim actions including an interim soil removal, to address contaminant sources. Additional onsite soil sampling results were reported in October 2007 to support an update of the risk assessment and soil cleanup criteria and selection of a final soil/source remedy. The results showed widespread onsite dioxin contamination in soils above State commercial/industrial use criteria as well as arsenic and some PAHs. DEP and local agencies recommended offsite soil sampling.

In early 2009, offsite soil sampling in a City easement and ROWs in the residential neighborhood west of the Koppers facility was conducted. Sampling on residential properties west of the former facility as well as offsite to the south, east and north was conducted in 2010. Additional sampling has been proposed to determine the offsite extent of soil contamination. Results to date indicate that the top 6 inches of soil contain dioxin, cPAHs and/or arsenic at concentrations above the State cleanup target levels for unrestricted residential use on residential properties west of the former facility, as well as ROW properties immediately south, east and north of the former facility. Offsite soil contamination is addressed in EPA's final site remedy.

A final Feasibility Study (FS) report was completed in May 2010 to support EPA's selection of a final remedy to address contaminated groundwater in the surficial aquifer, Hawthorn Group and Floridan aquifers, DNAPL sources and onsite soil contamination at the Koppers site and offsite soil contamination. The FS consists of an evaluation of remedial technologies and cleanup alternatives. Several field pilot studies to support evaluation of remedial technologies were

conducted including enhanced DNAPL recovery, onsite in situ biogeochemical stabilization (ISGS) pilot testing to address DNAPL, and solidification/stabilization of soil contamination to address leaching in source areas. FS review comments were provided to the EPA by DEP and local stakeholders. A revised final Risk Assessment Report to support selection of the onsite soil cleanup goals for the Koppers site was submitted by Beazer in May 2010. The probabilistic portions of the risk assessment were not approved by EPA nor supported by DEP. An offsite soil risk assessment was also submitted by Beazer in October 2010 and included proposed alternative soil cleanup criteria for residential properties. Beazer's proposed alternative soil criteria were not supported by either EPA or DEP. Beazer also proposed alternative sediment quality criteria based on a comparison of data from Koppers sites located outside of Florida. The proposed sediment criteria are higher than both EPA and DEP guidelines. DEP requires site specific testing to substantiate that higher allowable contaminant levels in Springstead and Hogtown creeks are protective.

The EPA issued a proposed plan in July 2010 identifying the proposed final soil, DNAPL, groundwater and sediment remedies for the Cabot Carbon/Koppers site, including offsite contaminated soil and sediment. The closing date for submittal of comments was October 15, 2010. The Amended Record of Decision, identifying the final site remedy, was signed by EPA in February 2011. DEP issued its concurrence in June 2011.

The final remedy for the former Koppers facility consists of a containment/treatment remedy including a cap and slurry wall enclosing the source areas in the surficial and Upper Hawthorn, and DNAPL treatment within the source areas by ISGS and in situ solidification/stabilization (ISSS). Onsite soils outside of the containment area with concentrations above leachability based SCTLs will be excavated and relocated within the cap/slurry wall. Excavated areas will be restored with clean fill to ensure that the top two feet of soil cover outside the containment area meets residential SCTLs. Groundwater contamination will be addressed by the existing surficial aquifer recovery and treatment systems as well as in situ treatment, hydraulic containment and monitored natural attenuation in the other affected aquifers. Groundwater recovery and treatment will be conducted in the Floridan Aquifer in areas where monitoring indicates that groundwater contamination is migrating and above groundwater cleanup goals at the former Koppers facility property boundary. Groundwater contamination in the Hawthorn will be addressed by in situ treatment and natural attenuation monitoring. Groundwater cleanup goals are based on the State GCTLs and federal MCLs. Groundwater remedies will continue until the contaminant plumes in all aquifers are stable or shrinking and groundwater does not exceed cleanup goals beyond the Koppers property boundary. Offsite contaminated soils will be addressed by excavation and consolidation onsite in the containment area or by engineering controls such as a cover with appropriate institutional controls. State soil cleanup target levels for commercial or residential use will be applied to individual off-site properties based on the current use. Institutional controls will be required where soil or groundwater is allowed to remain permanently above unrestricted use criteria. Contaminated sediments in Springstead and Hogtown creek with concentrations above State sediment quality criteria, EPA screening criteria or recreation-based cleanup target levels will be excavated and consolidated onsite. Until natural processes reduce sediment concentrations to SCTLs for unrestricted use, warning signs along the

creek as well as notice letters to residents of adjoining properties will be used to advise the public to avoid exposure to contaminated sediments.

The final remedy for the Cabot Carbon portion of the Superfund site includes continued surficial aquifer groundwater recovery and treatment along with installation of Hawthorn monitoring wells and in situ groundwater treatment if monitoring data indicates that Hawthorn groundwater contains contaminants attributable to former Cabot Carbon facility operations.

Cabot and its contractor, Weston, mobilized to the site in late January 2011 and completed an interim removal action in April. Sediments containing visual tarry materials in Springstead and Hogtown creeks were excavated and disposed offsite at a permitted disposal facility. Areas to be excavated were based on the 2009/2010 sediment quality data and field reconnaissance conducted by ACEPD. Sediment sampling will be conducted following the interim action to determine if sediments remain in the creeks at concentrations above sediment cleanup goals specified in EPA's final Superfund remedy.

In 2011, Beazer completed assessment of areas on the Koppers facility where historic aerial photos suggested possible buried drums or other features which could act as continued sources of groundwater contamination. No buried drums were found. A Drum Burial Assessment Report is anticipated in July 2011.

Schedule

EPA is currently negotiating consent decrees with Cabot Carbon and Beazer for implementation of the final Superfund remedy. Following execution of the consent decrees, remedial design and remedial action will be implemented.

Additional ongoing site-related activities include the following:

Operation and maintenance (O&M) of both the Koppers and Cabot Carbon surficial aquifer groundwater remediation systems is ongoing. Groundwater recovery using two existing onsite Floridan monitoring wells and the new Floridan recovery well is ongoing at the former Koppers facility. Beazer will install an additional groundwater recovery well in the Floridan aquifer at the east Koppers property boundary in 2011, if elevated contaminant levels persist in that area.

Regularly scheduled groundwater monitoring of surficial, Hawthorn and Floridan aquifer monitoring wells is ongoing. Monitoring results will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Superfund remedy.

Groundwater monitoring has confirmed offsite groundwater contamination in the Hawthorn formation, with naphthalene and phenolic compounds above cleanup goals. Cabot Corporation will install additional Hawthorn monitoring wells north/northeast of the former Cabot wastewater lagoons in 2011.

Beazer submitted a work plan for additional offsite soil sampling in April 2011. Additional offsite sampling is anticipated in the summer of 2011.

In May 2011, Beazer submitted a work plan for an ISGS field pilot in the Upper Hawthorn in the former process area, as required by the EPA ROD. The work plan is currently under review.