

Ethan Avenue Mercury Release

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Cooperative Effort

- Ohio EPA
- Cincinnati Health Department
- Cincinnati Fire Department
- Cincinnati City Services, multiple departments
 - TROD, DPS, DOTE, MSD, CPD, GCWW
- Hamilton County Emergency Management Agency
- ATSDR
- Many more

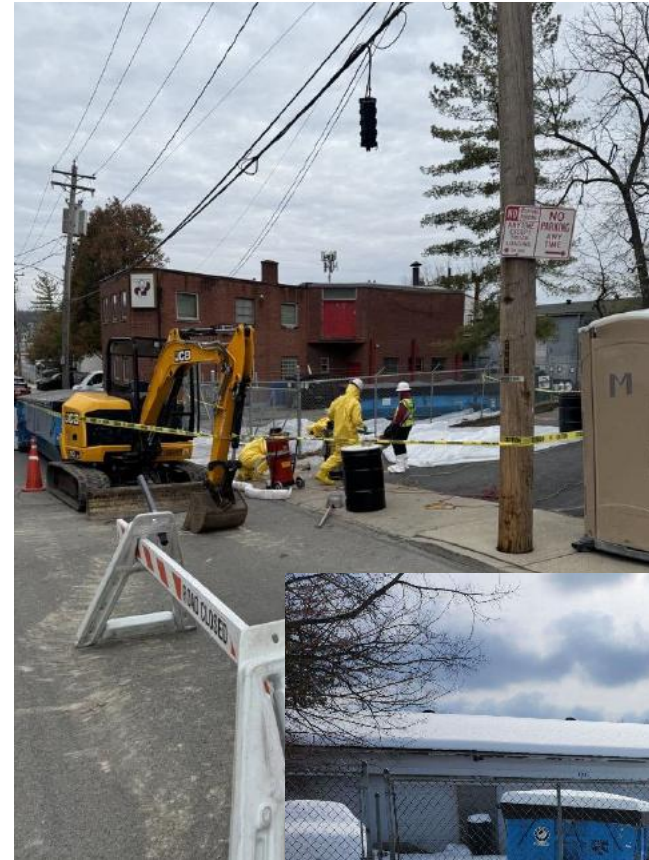
Timeline: Discovery to Initiation of Cleanup

- 11/16/24: CFD and CHD responded to report of child exposed to mercury
 - Child was evaluated at local hospital and returned home
- 11/22/24: CFD located mercury release site on Ethan Ave. west of Colerain Ave., isolated area, and notified OEPA
- 11/22 to 11/24/24: OEPA responded and conducted initial screening of area and some residences and apartment areas
 - Children were observed playing with jar of mercury
 - Initially estimated at 4-5 pounds of mercury
- 11/25/24: USEPA received request for assistance and mobilized resources to begin cleanup and conduct additional screenings



Timeline: Cleanup to Completion

- 11/25 to 12/9/24: Investigated source and evaluated extent of contamination.
- 11/25 to 12/8/24: Conducted removal of mercury and contaminated media.
- 12/9 to 12/31/24: Restoration of excavated areas
 - Restoration and repairs to staging areas and apartments continued into early March
- 2/5 to 2/6/25: All waste shipped to CERCLA Off-Site Rule compliant facilities
 - ~55 tons of non-hazardous mercury contaminated media including soil, gravel, asphalt and concrete
 - One drum of D009 waste mercury



Initial Response Actions

- Contain and secure area
- Evaluate extent of contamination
 - Screen surrounding area, residences, apartments, and commercial/public buildings
 - Identify/locate anyone potentially exposed (Cincy Alert/Flyer)
- Continue to investigate source of mercury and final disposition of remaining mercury
- Recover visible mercury and removal of contaminated media



If you think you or your child may have touched mercury along Ethan Ave. in the Camp Washington neighborhood since November 16, please call the Cincinnati Health Department at 1-800-222-1222



Investigation



Investigation

- Hospital retained mercury that made it into trash compactors
- Screening did not identify any vapors above background



Investigation

- Inspected and screened accessible receptables along Ethan and Colerain
- Determined origin of jar of mercury that resulted in release
 - Description suggested jar contained ~10-14 lbs of mercury
 - Spill could have occurred as early as late September
- Inspection of junkyard identified additional mercury and area isolated



Cleanup Approach Outdoors

- Recovered visible mercury with merc vacuum
- Remove contaminated soil and gravel
 - Screen and repeat as needed
- Concrete and asphalt
 - Areas in poor condition were removed
 - Screened remaining areas:
 - Elevated areas were vacuumed, heated and rescreened and removed if readings remained elevated
 - All other areas were heated after being vacuumed
- All cracks, seams, etc. were sealed as a precaution



Cleanup Approach Indoors

- Remove contaminated materials
- Heat and vent



Special Circumstances/Complications

- High traffic area
 - Multi-unit apartment building
 - Bus stop
 - Colerain was a main street
 - Ethan was a cut through
 - Several small businesses
- Weather
 - Extreme Cold
 - Rain



Special Circumstances/Complications

- Volume & Age of Release
 - Potential to be widespread
 - Worked its way into cracks
- Concrete removal
 - Utilities
 - Weight & Size
 - Coal chute
 - Restoration



Special Circumstances/Complications-Cracks





Special Circumstances/Complications-Coal Chute



Special Circumstances/Complications- Coal Chute



Special Circumstances/Complications- Coal Chute



Restoration



The Human Factor



The Human Factor



Questions?

