



In brief

Final touches on the former Avtex administration building renovation, the parking lot and landscaping, will be completed by June 1.

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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Cleanup plan selected by EPA

On March 10, 2004, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency selected a plan for the next phase of cleanup at the Avtex Fibers Superfund site.

The plan, called a Record of Decision, or ROD, for Operable Unit 10, outlines steps for dealing with several areas of the site, including contaminated soils around former plant buildings.

The new plan also calls for the closure of an old landfill and eight viscose basins, and directs the cleanup and eventual demolition of the

site's wastewater treatment plant.

The eight basins included in the plan were used for disposal of waste viscose,



Field Geologist collects a groundwater sample from one of over 100 test wells at the site.

construction debris and other non-hazardous materials when the plant was an active rayon fac-

tory. The rayon plant opened in 1940 and closed in 1989.

- **Viscose Basins 1-8** are to be capped with a compacted soil cover of at least two feet, graded to provide for proper drainage of storm water and erosion control, and planted with native grasses and shrubs.

The plan also calls for ongoing future groundwater monitoring and inspections and maintenance of the basin caps.

- **The Wastewater Treatment Plant** was used when the plant was active to treat

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Work on powerhouse buildings to start

Initial work on the massive Powerhouse Complex, long expected to be the biggest hurdle in demolition work at the Avtex site, will be able to start this summer as part of a funding package approved by Congress last fall.

By this summer the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in coordination with FMC Corp., will begin cleanup of asbestos, coal dust and coal in the 10-acre complex, according to Army Corps Project Manager Al Opstal.

"We're working on a plan

now on how to best address these issues," he said. "We'll be starting by the summer on the asbestos in the Powerhouse Complex."

The Army Corps has \$6 million in hand, appropri-

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Cleanup

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wastewater from rayon production, and has been used in the cleanup process since the plant closed. When no longer needed for cleanup, the wastewater buildings will be decontaminated and demolished.

- The **Landfill**, created in 1983 when the rayon plant was active, was used to dispose of construction debris, solid viscose and rayon fibers.

The plan calls for the landfill to be capped with two feet of soil, graded for proper drainage and erosion control and planted with native grasses and shrubs.

Further requirements include constructing a system to control and clean any possible water leaching from the landfill, and performing future monitoring, inspections and maintenance.

- **Soils** around the site of existing or demolished plant buildings will be evaluated for possible contamination, and any contaminated soils will be removed. This area will then be graded and replanted.

The next step for implementing the ROD will be creating a detailed technical plan for carrying out the selected cleanup. This plan will be written by FMC Corp. and approved by EPA before work begins. FMC Corp., a former owner of the site, is

responsible for performing the cleanup actions at the site under the terms of a consent decree issued in 1999. FMC expects to complete the work plan this year. Pending EPA approval, work will start in 2005.

The ROD is aimed at ensuring the areas included in the plan will be safe for future reuse. Redevelopment plans for the 440-acre site call for a high-tech business park on the eastern half of the site, where the plant buildings were located.

A nature preserve and recreation area are planned on the western half of the site, in the area where the viscose basins, landfill and wastewater treatment plant are now located.

Army Corps

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ated by Congress for the next phase of demolition at the site – about 15 acres of former plant buildings in the center of the property. However, the Corps will be able to start work on the Powerhouse Complex from those funds as well, Opstal said.

During the site's 50-year life as an operating rayon plant, the power complex housed the plant's own in-house electrical generating facility. At the center of the complex is a five-story boiler house, by far the most massive structure on the 440-acre site.

While demolition of the boiler house and related structures in the complex will have to wait until next year, cleanup of the buildings will pave the way for that phase.

Congress has approved but not yet appropriated the remaining \$5 million needed to take down the powerhouse buildings. The demolition and cleanup of asbestos and lead in the

plant buildings is not part of the Superfund cleanup of the site and has been paid for by funds approved by Congress in efforts led by U.S. Sen. John Warner, R-VA., and Rep. Frank Wolf, R-10th.

There are two cleanup issues that need to be addressed in the Powerhouse Complex, Opstal said. In addition to asbestos, which the Corps is responsible for managing, there is a large amount of coal and coal dust. Coal was used in the powerhouse to produce electricity.

Removal of both asbestos and coal is being coordinated with FMC, which is responsible for materials covered under the Superfund cleanup, not a simple matter because some of those materials are mixed, Opstal said.

"You have asbestos mixed with coal dust," he said. There's also a large quantity of coal left in a hopper when the plant suddenly closed in 1989."

Demolition of the powerhouse buildings will start in early 2005 if the remaining \$5 million is appropriated this fall. First to come down will be the buildings surrounding the boiler house. Then that massive structure will be torn down as well.

"We're really narrowing the scope to just that one big powerhouse building to be the last thing to tackle," Opstal said.

In April, the Army Corps began the final phase of demolition of the remaining rayon plant buildings west of the Powerhouse Complex. The work is expected to take about three months. When this demolition is completed in August only the powerhouse buildings will remain of the 65 acres of factory buildings that once stood at the site.

Demolition of the plant buildings makes way for the planned redevelopment of the eastern half of the site as a 175-acre business park.

Superfund work progressing

Superfund cleanup actions at the Avtex Fibers site are progressing, with about half of the work on 220 acres of waste basins completed and final work on debris removal from early building demolition starting soon.

In May, FMC Corp. will begin managing the last 5% of debris left when the EPA demolished 17 acres of buildings at the site. FMC is performing site cleanup under the oversight of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

A project that started in 1998, FMC has been sorting rubble from the building demolition and debris from inside the buildings. About 22 million pounds of reusable scrap metal has been recycled.

Work on about 135,000 cubic yards of other demolition debris has been completed. This includes about 8,000 cubic yards of asbestos and viscose that has been disposed of in

approved off-site landfills.

What remains is about 5,000 cubic yards of smaller, fine particle debris. FMC will stabilize lead in those materials so the debris can be



safely placed in an on-site landfill.

About half of the fly ash and sulfate basins at the site have been cleaned and capped, with native plants and grasses planted on soil covering them. The basins are in an area

slated for wildlife habitats in the planned Conservancy Park.

Also nearing completion is decontamination of remaining buildings. About 90% of that work has been completed. The remaining 10% of decontamination consists of work to be done in the former rayon plant's Powerhouse Complex and will be completed this year.

EPA recently selected a plan for cleanup of eight viscose basins and soils at the site, capping of an old landfill and eventual demolition of the wastewater treatment plant buildings. A detailed plan for carrying out the cleanup is in the works. (See *Cleanup page 1*.)

FMC will soon complete evaluation of cleanup alternatives for the remaining three viscose basins and on-site groundwater. A strategy for doing the work is being developed. This will be the final cleanup document for the site.

EDA fine tunes business park design

A fine-tuned plan for the creation of the first 90 acres of business development at the Avtex site is in the works by the Front Royal-Warren County Economic Development Authority.

And that plan, which will be presented to the EDA in April, paves the way for the first aggressive marketing of the land to potential new businesses.

Although a general plan for a high-tech business park on the eastern half of the 440-acre Avtex site was created by the EDA in 1998, EDA Chairman Ron Mabry, member William Barnett and Project/Property Manager Jennifer McDonald have been working with local engineer Chuck Maddox of G.W. Clifford and Associates to develop a more finely honed vision for the acres.

The first phase of the planned business park, the renovation of the former Avtex administration building facing Kendrick Lane, was completed last year.

Included in the more detailed concept plan are 26 acres west of the administration building, 50 acres southeast of the building and the 10-acre former Avtex parking lot, located across Kendrick Lane. Once these areas are completely addressed, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will make a ready-for-reuse determination for the acres. Excluded from the new plan are about 80 acres south of the building.

The EDA's vision for the park includes development of the former parking lot for commercial uses and

of the remaining acres included in the plan with light industrial/businesses facilities. The new plan will include details such as the size and placement of buildings, layout for roads and parking.

Once the plan is approved by the EDA, the Warren County Board of Supervisors and the Front Royal Town Council, the EDA will begin preparing to market the land to prospective new businesses.

"The next step will be how to market it - who to target, what kinds of businesses," McDonald said.

EDA officials project the business park will bring about \$100 million in business investment and about 2,500 new jobs to the area.



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Upcoming Events

June/July:

Skyline Soccerplex construction an-
 nouncement.

Location and time to be announced.

AVTEX

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