



**Middletown Works
Middletown, Ohio**

FACT SHEET No. 1

Environmental Consent Decree

October 2006

Introduction

In April 2006, AK Steel signed an agreement with the government and citizen groups that will result in environmental improvements in and around the Middletown Works facility. The agreement became effective on May 15, 2006.

Known formally as a Consent Decree, this agreement outlines specific actions AK Steel will take to address PCB issues in Dicks Creek, which is located south of Oxford State Road and flows into the Great Miami River. AK Steel will also investigate potential on-site contamination at the steel plant.

The agreement requires AK Steel to pay a civil penalty of \$460,000, and to complete a supplemental environmental project at the facility worth at least \$750,000. If AK Steel does not follow the agreement, there could be additional penalties.

The cleanup of Dicks Creek and the site investigation at Middletown Works are expected to cost more than \$13 million and take several years to finish. Work on both is already underway, but the Dicks Creek cleanup is expected to be completed first.

There are three main areas of work that must be completed under the Consent Decree:

- Interim Measures at Dicks Creek
- Corrective Action at Middletown Works
- Supplemental Environmental Project



Site Location of Middletown Works and Dicks Creek

Interim Measures at Dicks Creek

Under the agreement, AK Steel will remove sediment (dirt from the bottom of the creek) contaminated with PCBs from a 2.5-mile stretch of Dicks Creek and the last 0.7 miles of Monroe Ditch. Monroe Ditch is a tributary to Dicks Creek that runs through a slag processing area adjacent to the plant.

AK Steel is also planning to remove PCB-contaminated soils from the floodplain of Dicks Creek, as well as address several additional areas of contamination at the slag processing site. The cleanup must achieve target levels specified in the Consent Decree. The company must also maintain a control system to prevent PCBs from reaching the creek in the future.



A portion of Dicks Creek that will be cleaned up.

Corrective Action at Middletown Works

Under the agreement, AK Steel has also agreed to conduct a series of environmental studies to define the nature and extent of contamination on its property due to releases of wastes from past operations.

Because the Middletown Works facility is regulated by the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), it is subject to RCRA Corrective Action requirements. The studies will include a RCRA Facility Investigation (RFI) involving extensive testing of soil, groundwater and other media at the site and off site, and a Corrective Measures Study (CMS) to evaluate alternative cleanup methods.

A final decision on what type of cleanup is needed, if any, will be made later by the regulatory agencies.

Supplemental Environmental Project

Under the agreement, AK will replace ozone-depleting refrigerants in a plant chiller and the air conditioning systems of several cranes with more environmentally friendly refrigerants.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who are the parties to the agreement?

The parties to the agreement are AK Steel, the U.S. EPA, the Ohio EPA, the Sierra Club and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). The parties negotiated the agreement in good faith, and all agree that it serves the public interest and avoids a lengthy lawsuit.

What led to the agreement?

The agreement grew out of a lawsuit that began in June 2000 over various environmental issues at the site, including the discovery of off-site contamination in Dicks Creek.

What are Interim Measures?

Under this Consent Decree, Interim Measures are actions AK Steel must take in the near term to control or abate potential threats to human health and the environment. They need to be conducted prior to completion of the longer-term Corrective Action studies. In short, it means removing PCBs from the Dicks Creek area, and verifying that the target levels for the cleanup have been met. For more details, see Attachment 1 of the Consent Decree. A copy is available in the AK Steel Information Repository (see below).

What is Corrective Action?

Corrective Action is a regulatory process under RCRA for achieving long-term cleanup of contamination at industrial and commercial properties. The entire process usually takes many years to complete. For more details on Corrective Action at Middletown Works, see Attachment 2 of the Consent Decree. A copy is available in the AK Steel Information Repository (see below).

When will the remediation work begin?

Remediation work actually began in the late 1990s, including the installation of a trench along the banks of Monroe Ditch to intercept and treat PCBs in groundwater. In both Dicks Creek and Monroe Ditch, there has been extensive sampling of sediments, testing and remediation of groundwater seeps, and the posting of signs advising the public not to fish, swim, wade or drink. AK Steel also voluntarily placed a fence between Amanda Elementary School and Dicks Creek.

What's available in the Information Repository?

The Information Repository contains documents related to the Interim Measures for the Dicks Creek Study Area, including the Consent Decree, reports, work plans, and data. All the documents are available for public review. The repository is housed at the Middletown Public Library (see below).

Additional information is available from the following sources:

Interim Measures Public Relations Coordinator

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ETC, Inc.
31 Triangle Park Drive, Suite 3103
Cincinnati, Ohio 45246
Email: deb.leonard@etc-online.com
Fax: 513-772-7904
Toll Free Environmental Information Line:
1-866- 902-4257 (4AKS)

AK Steel Information Repository

Middletown Public Library
125 S. Broad Street
Middletown, Ohio 45044
513-424-1251
Hours of operation:
Monday - Friday: 9:00 am – 9:00 pm
Saturday: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Sunday: 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm