



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

National Headquarters

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October 31, 2023

Board Memo 139-2023: Mercury Spill at the St. Louis NDC Update

Executive Board,

Below is an update from the Michael Swigart, the Executive Director of Continuity and Preparedness, regarding the mercury spill that occurred October 26th at the St. Louis NDC location.

Situation: Assessment and remediation continues in the St. Louis NDC.

Final clearance sampling has begun for the De Soto office and will continue throughout the day.

The activities and progress described below are current as of 1100 (eastern).

October 31, 2023 – Occupational Safety & Health Morning Update

St. Louis NDC – 5800 Phantom Drive, Hazelwood, MO

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED Overnight 10/30 – 10/31/23:

- Contractor continued to clear mail from the conveyors and chutes in and around PSM 3 & 4.
- Contractor screened packages that came off the chutes to reduce the amount of packages sent to decontamination. All clear mail was segregated and placed for release.
- Airborne mercury levels around PSM 3 increased significantly during the remediation activities throughout the evening.
 - The movement of contaminated packages overnight through the sorting system likely caused the contamination to move to ground level, which accelerated the vaporization of mercury, leading to the increase airborne levels. This was expected and is being managed by the contractor.
- The contractor estimates 50-60% of the conveyer belt in PSM 3 and 4 has been cleared of mail.
- Twenty (20) gaylords have been cleared, packed, and are staged for release. The contractor is working with local management to get mail processed.
- The contractor is working with local management to obtain more trailers for clean/cleared mail.
- Approximately sixteen (16) gaylords of contaminated mail have been staged for decontamination.

Air Quality:

- Airborne mercury levels around PSM 3 & 4 were above Postal criteria.
- The contractor will monitor levels throughout the day and resume mail clearance when safe breathing levels are reached.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES Dayshift 10/31/23:

- Contractor will continue to vacuum and clean mercury found by during assessment, specifically in the PSM and express mail area.
- Mail will be assessed. Clean mail will be staged for release and contaminated mail will be staged for decontamination.
- Contractor will continue to clean any additional areas identified with mercury levels above Postal requirements.
- Floor tiles that were found to be contaminated on second level platform. No asbestos data was available, therefore samples will be collected and sent to lab for analysis.
 - If floor tile samples are negative for asbestos, they will be removed and disposed of.
 - If floor tiles are positive for asbestos, abatement will be necessary. The contractor has lined up a Missouri certified asbestos abatement firm to perform those activities, if necessary.
- Mercury was found in the oil reservoir for the conveyor track. Contractor is working on a plan for the oil reservoir remediation.
 - Contractor will draft a procedure for oil disposal and or track cleaning of the chain system that pulls carts around PSM 3 and 4.

Additional Notes:

None

DeSoto MPO – 950 Boyd St, De Soto, MO

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED Overnight 10/30 -10/31/23:

- Overnight the contractor identified a hot spot in the janitor's closet; that area was cleaned and cleared by 0500 CST.
- Overnight, it was also determined that asbestos abatement of the floor tile mentioned in the 10/30/23 evening sitrep was not needed. The contractor was able to clear the tile to appropriate levels.
- All cleaning and remediation activities were finalized at 0430 this morning.
- The contractor started final clearance sampling at 0500 CST this morning.
- Clearance samples should be completed by approximately 1300 CST this afternoon.
 - The samples will be flown to lab for analysis and hand delivered for processing once the chain of custody is created and samples are packaged.
 - Contactor will report expected turn-around-time once flight information and travel times have been finalized.
 - Estimated clearance and approval for re-opening of facility tomorrow afternoon.
- Contractor will provide a safety talk at Hillsboro tomorrow morning in anticipation of clearance.
- USPS IH will provide an "all-clear" once lab results are in evaluated.
- Mail decontamination activities will continue.

Additional Notes:

None

Air Quality:

Air quality continues to be favorable in breathing zone.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES Dayshift 10/31/23:

- Mail decontamination will continue while contactor waits for analytical results from the lab.

Additional Notes:

Contractor will request that unneeded personnel at DeSoto be sent to assist at the NDC.

Peoria – 95 State Street

- 34 packages have been placed in 55 gallon drums, and will likely be destroyed. USPS IH is working with contractor to determine best path forward.

General

- Contactor will continue to work on certificates of clearance.
- All sites in mail path have been cleared.

Please share this information with your membership.

Thank you, and be safe.

NAPS Headquarters