A Draft Hazardous Waste Management Permit has been prepared for the former Porcelanite Ceramic Tile Manufacturing Facility to conduct post-closure monitoring activities and corrective action at the facility under the Federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). North Carolina has been authorized by the United States Environmental Protection Agency to administer RCRA including the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments (HSWA) of 1984. The State has determined that the former Porcelanite Ceramic Tile Manufacturing Facility’s proposed activities as identified in the Hazardous Waste Part B Permit Application satisfy the full intent of the North Carolina Hazardous Waste Management Rules and Solid Waste Management Act as amended. When finalized, the Hazardous Waste Management Permit issued by the State of North Carolina will constitute a complete Permit under the Federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Background

Porcelanite, Inc. (Porcelanite), is an inactive ceramic tile manufacturing facility located at 20 Victor Street in Lexington, Davidson County, North Carolina. The facility is bound on the north by the Charles Avenue right of way and the Lexington City Cemetery; on the east by Cotton Grove Road (North Carolina Highway 8); on the south by Victor Street (State Road 1261); and on the west by the Winston-Salem Southbound Railway and undeveloped wooden property.

The entire property consists of approximately 7.5 acres. Historically, the property included a 126,000 square-foot process-building that had been used for manufacturing and office space, a small maintenance garage, and a small guard shack. The building has been razed and all that remains are concrete foundations. The property is surrounded by a seven-foot, chain-link fence topped with barbed wire.

The property was originally undeveloped, forested land. Ceramic tile manufacturing began in approximately 1960 and continued until 1999. Multiple waste streams were generated during operations. Wastes were managed using two wastewater holding ponds. Additionally, tiles that were rejected because they did not meet technical specifications were disposed of in the waste ceramic tile pile. Rejected materials included glazed and unglazed tile scraps, fired and unfired tile scraps, floor sweepings and unfired glaze waste.

A series of soil investigations were conducted beginning in 1989 to assess the type and magnitude of contamination associated with the two wastewater holding ponds and the waste ceramic tile pile. Soil contamination was inorganic and included barium, boron, chromium, cobalt, lead, manganese, mercury, vanadium, and zinc. In general, the most elevated contaminant concentrations in soils less than two feet in depth were associated with the former wastewater holding ponds, and, the most elevated contaminant concentrations measured in soils greater than two feet in depth were associated with the waste ceramic tile pile.

To evaluate the potential for adverse impacts to groundwater quality, monitoring wells were installed in a phased approach beginning in 1989 in the vicinity of the former wastewater holding ponds and the waste ceramic tile pile. The following contaminants were measured at concentrations exceeding their respective Groundwater Standards: arsenic, barium, boron, cadmium, chromium, iron, lead, manganese, nickel, and zinc. Aluminum, cobalt, potassium, sodium, titanium, and vanadium were also measured in groundwater at concentrations exceeding the laboratory method detection limits.

Extensive groundwater sampling and analysis has yielded a wealth of data. The list of parameters analyzed in groundwater and the number of monitoring wells sampled during routine groundwater monitoring events has been narrowed through time. Currently, only six inorganic parameters are analyzed in groundwater collected from six monitoring wells.

40 CFR 270.1(c) requires that owners and operators of hazardous waste management units obtain either a post-closure permit or an alternate mechanism in lieu of a post-closure permit. North Carolina’s Department of Environmental Quality Hazardous Waste Section called for a Hazardous Waste Permit Application on September 7, 2016. The Permit Application was submitted on March 6, 2107.
Although multiple drafts of the Permit Application were submitted, the Application was determined to be incomplete. The decision was made to draft the Post-Closure Hazardous Waste Management Permit based on the information that was provided in the Permit Application. Deficiencies are addressed in the Post-Closure Hazardous Waste Management Permit. The Post-Closure Hazardous Waste Management Permit addresses post-closure care, investigation, groundwater monitoring, corrective action, and financial assurance.

The North Carolina Hazardous Waste Management Rules require that the public be given a forty-five (45) day period to comment on the draft Post-Closure Hazardous Waste Management Permit. This forty-five (45) day period will commence on Tuesday, June 30, 2020, and end on Friday, August 14, 2020.

A Public Hearing will be held on Friday, July 31, 2020, at 11:00 am, at Washington Park located at 100 Bookington Drive in Lexington, North Carolina. Additionally, due to public health guidance to reduce the spread of COVID-19, a digital public hearing will also be conducted on Monday, August 3, 2020, at 11:00 am. Participation can take place in person, online, or via telephone. Information related to the digital public hearing can be found at: https://deq.nc.gov/news/events/public-notices-hearings.

All participants will have the opportunity to present five (5) minute oral statements during the Public Hearings regarding issuance of the draft Hazardous Waste Management Permit and/or to submit written comments and data. Written comments can also be sent at any time during the forty-five (45) day public comment period. Comments should be sent to the following address:

    Julie S. Woosley, Hazardous Waste Section Chief
    Division of Waste Management, NCDEQ
    MSC 1646
    Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1646

The draft Post-Closure Hazardous Waste Management Permit is available for review at the following web address: https://deq.nc.gov/news/events/public-notices-hearings. All data submitted by the applicant is part of the administrative record. Files are accessible through the document management system at: https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/waste-management/laserfiche. Documents can be searched using the EPA ID Number: 986181451.

All comments received during the public comment period or at the physical/digital public hearings will be considered in the final decision to issue, deny, or modify the Post-Closure Hazardous Waste Management Permit. Comments received after the public comment period ends on August 14, 2020, will not be considered. When the final decision is made to issue, deny, or modify the Post-Closure Hazardous Waste Management Permit, notice will be given to the applicant and to each person who has submitted written comments or requested notice of the final decision.