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DEC Secures Settlement to Close Honeywell Waste Beds 9-15

Company to Pay Penalty, Fund Local Projects and Reclaim Site through Green Remediation

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) today announced that Honeywell International has entered into a cleanup agreement to properly close waste beds formerly used for industrial operations off Airport Road in the towns of Camillus and Geddes, Onondaga County. The settlement requires the company to pay a \$100,000 penalty, investigate potential off-site impacts, reclaim the site by planting a vegetative cover and fund an array of local environmental projects to benefit the public.

Some of the local projects include building a boat/kayak launch at Onondaga Lake, improving fishing access to Nine Mile Creek and Onondaga Creek, commencing a public process to boost recreational opportunities at the reclaimed site and funding mitigation and research efforts (details below).

"This is a good settlement for the environment and for the people of Central New York," said DEC Regional Director Kenneth Lynch. "It not only mandates the closure of the waste beds but also sets forth a plan for reclaiming the land using a 'green remedy.' Further, Honeywell is obligated to fund a wide range of environmental benefit projects that will address ongoing issues and improve recreational opportunities."

Background

Consisting of approximately 670 acres, waste beds 9-15 were the primary means of disposal for the waste produced by the Solvay operations of Allied-Signal (formerly Solvay Process Company and currently Honeywell International Inc.), which included soda ash production. Soda ash is used in the production of glass, detergents and cleaners. Solvay process wastes are the predominant materials found in the waste beds and are primarily composed of calcium carbonate, calcium chloride and magnesium hydroxide. In addition, other waste streams from former plant operations including wastewater and bottom and fly ash, as well as wastewater sludges from Anheuser Busch and the Metropolitan Syracuse Wastewater Treatment Plant, were discharged into the waste beds. These additional waste streams contained other contaminants including volatile organic compounds, phenols and metals.

Analytical sampling on and in the vicinity of waste beds 9-15 has indicated that the waste bed material does not constitute a significant threat to public health or the environment.

However, because the waste beds have yet to be closed to current environmental standards, the chlorides have impacted the surrounding groundwater and surface water, including nearby Nine Mile Creek -- which drains to Onondaga Lake - necessitating a modern closure plan.

Settlement

The significant terms of the consent order include:

- Honeywell is required to submit and implement a closure plan for the entire waste beds 9-15 area, subject to review and approval by DEC.
- The closure plan may include an alternative cap that complies with current environmental regulations. Honeywell is expected to propose installation of an engineered cap system that will include shrub willow plantings.

- Closure plan work will be proposed and implemented annually until the entire waste bed area contains an effective engineered cap.
- Extensive sampling and monitoring is required before, during and after construction to demonstrate the effectiveness of the selected cover system.
- Honeywell is required to implement interim measures to address ongoing conditions such as erosion and seep areas. They are also required to evaluate the existing leachate collection system and identify and implement appropriate improvements to increase collection capabilities.
- Honeywell is required to undertake an extensive investigation of off-site areas and submit a plan to address any identified impacts.

The order also requires Honeywell to pay a \$100,000 penalty to the state. In addition, Honeywell is required to reimburse the Town of Camillus up to \$50,000/year for costs associated with the closure.

Separately, requirements for management and closure of the Sediment Consolidation Area proposed for waste bed 13 and the currently active construction debris disposal facility operated within waste bed 15 by the Town of Camillus are subject to different executed orders and not subject to requirements of the waste beds 9-15 order.

Environmental Benefit Projects (EBPs)

In addition, Honeywell must carry out the following improvement projects designed to benefit the local public and environment:

- Provide additional funding to address the mudboil problem on Onondaga Creek in the amount of \$250,000/year for five years. Mudboils, located in the southern part of the Onondaga Creek Valley, known as the Tully Valley, are unique geologic features that discharge turbid (cloudy), fresh and salty water at the land surface, into the creek and eventually to the Inner Harbor of Onondaga Lake.
- Design and construct an Onondaga Lake boat launch/kayak launch with universally accessible shoreline fishing along the southwest shore of the Lake.
- Commence a public process to develop recreational uses on the waste beds.
- Provide three years of public fishing access on a portion of Onondaga Creek.
- Provide public fishing rights and recreational access on portions of Nine Mile Creek.
- Provide funding for additional scientific research related to historic phosphorus and oxygen levels in Onondaga Lake.
- Provide funding to the Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District to support oversight of construction and other stormwater management issues in the Onondaga Lake watershed.

DEC and Honeywell will be developing a plan, including a public process, to implement the Environmental Benefit Projects in early 2011. Planning for the closure of waste beds 9-15 will also begin in early 2011.