

NPL Site Narrative for Lehigh Portland Cement Co.

LEHIGH PORTLAND CEMENT CO. Mason City, Iowa

Federal Register Notice: [August 30, 1990](#)

Conditions at proposal (June 24, 1988): Lehigh Portland Cement Co. owns and operates a Portland cement manufacturing facility on approximately 150 acres on the north side of Mason City, Cerro Gordo County, Iowa. The facility has been in operation since 1911. A by-product of the cement manufacturing process is waste kiln dust, which contains sulfates, potassium hydroxide, and chromium. The dust is placed in piles throughout the facility, and a large quantity is also disposed of directly into two of the four abandoned quarries on the property. The quarries are filled with water and drain into Calmus Creek directly south of the site.

In August 1984, the Iowa Department of Water, Air, and Waste Management (IDWAWM) conducted a comprehensive study of Calmus Creek and found contamination related to Blue Waters Pond, which is on the Lehigh site. In April 1985, a consultant to Lehigh started a study of the feasibility of eliminating Blue Waters Pond. Also in April 1985, IDWAWM issued an Administrative Order under the State water pollution control law requiring Lehigh to conduct a hydrogeologic investigation of the West Quarry. Lehigh installed three monitoring wells and sampled ground water and surface water. Wells downgradient of the site had significantly elevated pH levels (a maximum of

11.85), along with elevated levels of potassium, sodium, silicon, sulfates, total dissolved solids, and total organic carbon. An estimated 31,000 people obtain drinking water from public and private wells within 3 miles of the site. Wells are the sole source of drinking water in the area.

The pH of Arch Pond and Blue Waters Pond averaged 12. The Winnebago River is used for recreational activities within 3 miles downstream of the site.

Status (August 30, 1990): Under an Administrative Order on Consent with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources signed on April 15, 1990, Lehigh is performing a remedial investigation/feasibility study to determine the type and extent of contamination at the site and identify alternatives for remedial action.

[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination. See [56 FR 5600](#), February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]