



# Beltsville Agricultural Research Center BARC 32: PCB Cleanup



June 2005

In fall 2004, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) completed a cleanup of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contamination in soils at a maintenance yard at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC). PCBs are heat transfer fluids that have been demonstrated to have toxic properties, and are associated with old electric transformers. Transformers containing these fluids were stored at the facility in the past, and apparently had leaked PCB-containing fluids into the surrounding soil.

The extent of the PCB contamination involved analysis of samples from materials stored at the site, as well as samples from soil, surface and groundwater.

As a result of the sampling data, it was decided to conduct a Time Critical Removal Action to address the high concentrations of PCBs found at the site.

## Completed Removal Action Activities

A comprehensive Work Plan was prepared to guide the removal action of contaminated soil. Erosion control measures were put in place, and a Health and Safety Plan was developed to ensure that operations were conducted safely.

The removal action was conducted in the spring and summer of 2004. Excavated waste material went to an approved thermal treatment (recycling) and landfill disposal facilities.

As each area was completed, additional samples were collected to confirm that excavated areas now met established cleanup goals.

Over 9,000 tons of soil contaminated with PCBs was excavated from the site. At the conclusion of the cleanup, excavations were backfilled with clean soil and crushed

concrete. Landscaping, grading, and re-seeding activities have returned the site to productive use.

## Community Relations

Community relations activities are being conducted within the framework of BARC's facility-wide Community Relations Plan. There is a mailing list for interested individuals and organizations, an "Information Repository" for public access to information about the RI/FS process, and public meetings are periodically held.

## For More Information...

Contact Kim Kaplan, ARS Information Staff, at 301/ 504-1637, by e-mail at [kaplan@ars.usda.gov](mailto:kaplan@ars.usda.gov), or visit the ARS information repository located in Room 014, Building 003, 10300 Baltimore Avenue, Beltsville, MD. The information repository is open to the public Monday through Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm. The information repository is also available at the Prince George's County Memorial Library at 4319 Sellman Road. The library's hours of operation are Monday through Wednesday, 10 am to 9 pm; Thursday and Friday, 10 am to 6 pm; and Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm.