

**NEWS RELEASE***For Immediate Release***September 27, 2023**

The Environment Department's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.

Contact: Matthew Maez, Communications Director
New Mexico Environment Department
505.670.8911 | matthew.maez@env.nm.gov

Environment Department reviewing Stage 1 Abatement Plan to assess soil vapors associated with the former Sparton Technology site groundwater plume

ALBUQUERQUE– The New Mexico Environment Department's Ground Water Quality Bureau (GWQB) is reviewing a Stage 1 Abatement Plan (Plan) to address potentially harmful vapors connected with chlorinated solvent used at the former Sparton Technology (Sparton) manufacturing plant located at 9621 Coors Blvd NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Chlorinated solvents are chemicals used in many commercial and industrial processes including cleaning and degreasing during manufacturing. These chlorinated solvents are toxic and, in some cases, carcinogenic (cancer-causing) and can endanger human health and the environment, if released. Solvents like these can contaminate both groundwater and exist as a gas in pockets of air underground. These subsurface vapors have the potential to enter structures and cause negative health effects for occupants.

Sparton is actively cleaning up environmental contamination associated with the plant's previous operations, with oversight by NMED's Hazardous Waste Bureau (HWB). The focus of the current remediation is to clean up groundwater contamination caused, in part, by the plant's use and discharge of chlorinated solvents. Sparton maintains several groundwater containment systems to shrink the contamination. Progress of the clean-up is routinely checked using an extensive monitoring well network. Though the HWB program addresses groundwater contamination directly, it does not address any associated subsurface vapors.

Over the past decade, our understanding of the environmental and human health impacts from subsurface vapors has advanced significantly. In response, the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) amended the New Mexico Ground and Surface Water Protection Regulations (20.6.2 NMAC), in December 2018 to establish abatement requirements for the vapor intrusion pathway. Considering the plant's historical use and discharge of chlorinated solvents, GWQB notified Sparton of their obligation to submit a Plan to quantify the extent and magnitude of chlorinated solvents in subsurface vapor and determine whether vapor intrusion is a risk to the area.

On behalf of Sparton, S.S. Papadopoulos & Associates, Inc. submitted the Plan to the GWQB on August 28, 2023. The Plan proposes to profile soil vapor concentrations across areas impacted by the Sparton groundwater contamination plumes to determine if vapors are reaching the surface in sufficient concentration to potentially threaten the health of occupants or residences through vapor intrusion. By October 27, 2023, the department will either approve the Plan or require Sparton to address deficiencies and resubmit the Plan. Depending on the results of the investigation, the department may require

Sparton to perform further assessment or submit a Stage 2 Abatement Plan that includes a remediation strategy for subsurface vapors. The Plan is available [here](#). Information on the groundwater remediation overseen by HWB is available [here](#).

For more information on the Plan, contact Kate Herrell of the State Clean-up Program at 505-670-1796 or kate.herrell@env.nm.gov, or Paul Chamberlain at 505-670-2571, paul.chamberlain@env.nm.gov. NMED is providing this notice of receipt of the Stage 1 Abatement Plan pursuant to 20.6.2.4108 (A) NMAC.

Between [July 2022 and June 2023](#), the compliance rate for facilities managing ground water across New Mexico averaged 97.7%.

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