

Regional Response Team (RRT) Annual Report										
Region:		2		Calendar Year:		2023				
EPA RRT Co-Chair:		Doug Kodama		Email:		kodama.doug@epa.gov				
USCG RRT Co-Chair:		Joe Boudrow		Email:		Joseph.A.Boudrow@uscg.mil				
EPA RRT Coordinator:		Steve Touw		Email:		touw.steve@epa.gov				
USCG RRT Coordinator:		LTJG Olivia Oursler		Email:		Olivia.M.Oursler@uscg.mil				
A. Annual Meetings										
	Dates	Location		# of Attendees	Website for presentations					
1.	July 12, 2023	Virtual			http://www.nrt.org/RRT2July2023					
2.	November 8-9, 2023	Middlesex Co. Fire Academy Sayreville, NJ		Approx. 65	https://www.nrt.org/RRT2November2023					
B. Activations / Notifications										
1.	Dates:	2/9/23 to present	Event:	Compounders Inc. Site Howell Township, Monmouth County, NJ				ACT	NOT	X
	Issue / Concern:		On February 9, 2023, Howell Township Fire Departments were dispatched to the former Compounders Inc. site, where they discovered materials burning inside an old metal structure. Compounders manufactured chemical compounds including glues, adhesives, and asphalt materials, and operated until 2019. The current owner purchased the business as part of a stock sale in 2021. Firefighters found numerous drums and smelled a chemical odor. After extinguishing the fire, firefighters called HTOER, who called in MCDOH to address potential hazardous materials. MCDOH discovered large quantities of 55-gallon drums, along with smaller quantities of other containers around the site. MCDOH and HTOER also found spilled materials on the ground and open drums, as well as solid waste. NJDEP Bureau of Emergency Response assessed the site after a request from MCDOH and found approximately 200 to 300 55-gallon drums and containers, many of which were either bulging, rusting, denting, or leaking. NJDEP requested EPA's assistance on 2/15, and an EPA OSC responded to the scene later that day.							
	Agencies Involved:		Howell Township Fire Department & Office of Emergency Response (HTOER); Monmouth County Department of Health (MCDOH); NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) Bureau of Emergency Response; EPA							
	Decisions Made:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once on scene, the OSC issued the property representative a Notice of Federal Interest (NOFI). EPA found breaches in the front fence, and no fence securing any other side of the property. EPA observed containers that were leaking and labeled as hazardous materials. EPA's ERRS contractor was activated on 2/17 and directed to retain a 24-hour security service to monitor the site until a fence was erected. Fence installation around the main area of concern - the former production area where the drums and containers were haphazardly stored - was completed by the PRP's contractor on 3/22. The initial Consent to Access Property signed on 3/9 was limited to only provide access to EPA for oversight of fence installation and site walks with PRP contractors for the purpose of developing cost estimates. EPA intended to allow the PRP to conduct the removal action; however, with the concerns shared at a public meeting on 3/21, and the PRP's concerns with the potential cost of a removal action, EPA determined that the PRP was not able to conduct the removal action themselves. On 4/4, the PRP's counsel provided an executed Consent to Access Property to ORC allowing EPA to conduct the assessment and removal action. EPA began its assessment of the site as soon as access was granted on 4/4, which included sampling the contents of the drums and assessing their condition. On 4/10, EPA and START contractors conducted background air monitoring. EPA directed START to establish four 							

		<p>perimeter air monitoring stations, as well as two off-site air monitoring stations near the Farmingdale Elementary School and the Howell Township High School. Perimeter and off-site air monitoring took place during site activity in which the drums and containers on-site were being sampled, moved, or handled. A public facing web-based viewer for sharing the air monitoring locations and their status was established, and a hyperlink was added to the Response.EPA.Gov webpage for partner agencies, local governments, and the general public to access the near real-time monitoring data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On 4/11, ERRS arrived on-site and began staging the site to conduct assessment and removal action activities. A containment area was established and ERRS began moving the small “lab pack” materials, which were originally located in the “laboratory” and moved outside by the PRP, into the containment area. Those materials were secured within the warehouse, out of the elements, to undergo field analysis to determine the contents of the smaller containers. - Due to the physical condition of many of the drums, ranging from dented to completely disintegrated with free-standing solid product on pallets, extra care had to be taken to ensure that the overpacking or re-containerization was done as safely as possible. Drum overpacking activities were completed on 5/25, totalling 556 drums. “HazCat” activities of the approximately 1,000 lab pack containers continued until the end of June. On 6/30, EPA and its contractors demobilized from the Site until disposal activities are scheduled. As of February 2024, EPA was still finalizing efforts to secure the necessary approvals and contracts for the transportation and disposal of the material.
2.	Dates: 05 July 2023 Issue / Concern: Agencies Involved: Decisions Made:	Event: M/V GRANDE COSTA D’AVORIO Shipboard Fire USCG Sector New York received report of a fire on the M/V GRANDE COSTA D’AVORIO, a roll on/roll off & container ship in the Port of Newark. The ship had over 2k containers & vehicles on board at the time of the fire. While fighting the fire, two municipal firefighters lost their lives. Salvor Donjon-SMIT took lead on firefighting efforts. Structural and environmental concerns ensued based on the unknown contents onboard. The fire continued for 05 days before being extinguished. Fire is under investigation. USCG, NJ DEP, Newark FD, Port Authority of NY & NJ, FDNY, Donjon SMIT, NJRFTF Response considerations included possible oil discharges from the burning vessel. RRT members were contacted to inform them that dewatering efforts to maintain stability were necessary and in the dewatering process, oil could be discharged. EPA, DOI, NOAA, Fish & Wildlife and State of New Jersey all consulted. Minor oil sheening was observed.

C. RRT Exercises –Although not formal RRT exercises, RRT Member Agencies participated in the following exercises within Region 2:				
1.	Dates: Agencies Involved: Summary of exercise:	10/18-19/2023 RRT member agencies participating included USCG, EPA, NOAA, USFWS and NJDEP, as well as other state, county and local government agencies and entities. This boom deployment and tabletop exercise was hosted by Bayway and demonstrated activities that may occur with a release in USCG jurisdiction.	Event: Bayway Global IMAT Exercise, Linden, NJ	
2.	Dates: Agencies Involved: Summary of exercise:	11/14-15/2023 Invitees included DHS, DOE, EPA, FBI, FEMA, FDNYC, Middlesex County Hazardous Materials Unit, NJDEP, NY 24th CST, NYC DEP, NYC EM, NYC DOHMH, NYSDEC, NYSDOH, Rutgers University, USCG, and Weston Solutions. The purpose of the event was to present radiological response and train/re-train emergency response staff performing radiological assessment entries in Level B (SCBA) ensemble.	Event: 2023 EPA Region 02 Radiological Training & Exercise	
3.	Dates: Agencies Involved: Summary of exercise:		Event:	

D. Changes in RRT Leadership		
Agency	Outgoing Personnel	Incoming personnel
1) USCG D1 RRT Coordinator	LCDR Kristi Butler	LTJG Olivia Oursler
2)		
3)		
E. Best Practices and Lessons Learned by the RRT (which may help other RRTs)		
None during the period of this report.		

F. Federal, State, Local, and Tribal Planning and Coordination Efforts
<p>Upper Delaware River Contingency Planning: EPA Regions 2 and 3 continue a series of planning and preparedness activities in coordination with NPS, state and county agencies which began in 2021. On 10/4/23, the participants conducted a functional exercise with a command component and on-water boom deployment component. While the spill location was Milford Beach, PA, boom deployment was across the river in NJ. The resulting activity will be used to update/revise the applicable area contingency plans and the NPS Upper Delaware River Spill Response Plan.</p> <p>Executive Order 13650 Continued Coordination: EPA, DHS and OSHA continue to share facility-specific information in accordance with each agency's requirements, policies, and procedures. EPA shares such information on an as-needed basis with federal, state, and local partners. EPA continues to compare DHS, NJDEP and EPA inventory data to identify non-filers for potential inspection candidates and referrals to other agencies.</p>
G. Challenges and Issues (and Operational Requirements Which May Require NRT Attention)
<p>This was the first in-person RRT2 meeting since the start of the COVID pandemic in March 2020, and a majority of attendees were attending their first RRT2 meeting. The energy level and interactions between attendees were high.</p> <p>Virtual RRT meetings, although safest during the pandemic and in alignment with various Agency and organizational restrictions, were not as effective in establishing and maintaining the personal relationships developed at in-person RRT meetings. Identifying facilities and resources to successfully host and accommodate hybrid meetings continues to pose challenges.</p>