



## News from the Field, June 2007

### In this Pines Update....

Northern Indiana Public Service (NIPSCO) and Brown Inc. (Brown) are conducting an investigation of the nature and occurrence of coal combustion by-products in the Area of Investigation, located in the vicinity of the Town of Pines, Indiana. Pines Updates No. 11 through 14 (available at [www.pinesupdate.com](http://www.pinesupdate.com)) detailed the Field Investigation activities and provided progress reports on those activities.

This *Pines Update #16* provides the Pines Community with information on the status of the Field Investigation and presents information on the next step in the process, which is the preparation of a Draft Remedial Investigation (RI) Report.

### Access Agreements Needed!

Authorization from property owners is needed to enter their property to conduct the visual inspections of coal combustion by-products. ENSR is in the process of working with owners to obtain access. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Communications Coordinator (see back page for contact information).

### Field Investigation Update

As outlined in the Field Sampling Plan, the Field Investigation will take approximately two years to complete. At this time, the Field Investigation is almost finished. Since the Field Sampling Plan was approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) in September 2005, a great deal of work has been completed.

- The **groundwater investigation** is nearly complete. 38 monitoring wells and 4 piezometers have been sampled in the Area of Investigation. The wells were sampled four times (August 2006, October 2006, January 2007, April 2007), and over 150 groundwater samples were collected. At the same time, groundwater levels were measured in all monitoring wells and piezometers. Groundwater sampling is now complete. The final groundwater level measurement event is scheduled for July 2007.
- The **surface water investigation** being conducted in Brown Ditch and other area water bodies is also nearly complete. Surface water samples were collected four times (August 2006, October 2006, January 2007, April 2007), totaling over 180 samples. 15 staff gages were installed, and surface water levels were measured when the samples were collected. As with the groundwater sampling, surface water sampling is now complete. The final surface water level measurement event is scheduled for July 2007.
- The **sediment sampling** outlined in the Field Sampling Plan is complete. A total of 30 sediment samples were collected.
- The **private well** sampling is complete. Groundwater samples were collected from 11 private wells in August, September, and October 2006 and in January and April 2007. The private well sampling is complete.
- The **background soil sampling** is complete. Samples of native soils were collected from 25 locations in and around the Area of Investigation. The USEPA project manager was present for all background soil sample location and collection activities.

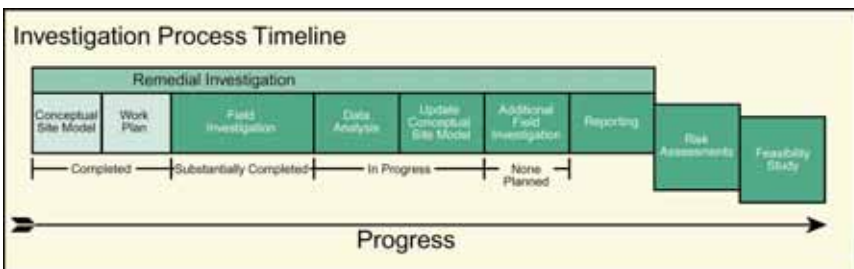
All samples collected during the Field Investigation were collected under Chain of Custody documentation (similar to the process used when you give blood), and are sent to a National Certified Laboratory for analysis using USEPA-approved methods. Further, the analytical data obtained from the laboratory are subject to extensive and stringent Quality Analysis and Quality Control (QA/QC) standards, guaranteeing that data used for Remedial Investigation will be of demonstrated reliability (see next page for more detailed information about the Remedial Investigation).

### Field Investigation Update – Next Steps

While the Field Investigation is substantially complete, there are a few tasks remaining:

- Measuring groundwater levels in monitoring wells and piezometers (July 2007);

- Measuring surface water levels (July 2007); and
- Visual inspections of coal combustion by-products. Access agreements are needed before this work can be scheduled and completed; ENSR (on behalf of NIPSCO and Brown) are working now with property owners.



## What's Next ... the Remedial Investigation Report

With the Field Investigation nearing completion, the Remedial Investigation will be moving into the next phase. Pines Update #10 (available at [www.pinesupdate.com](http://www.pinesupdate.com)) provides information on each step of the process.

The next step is preparing the Draft Remedial Investigation (RI) Report. One of the main purposes of the RI Report is to present the data and information that was obtained during the course of the Field Investigation. The RI Report will include the results of the data and sample collection activities. Much of the information collected is analytical data consisting of laboratory results from the testing of various samples. As mentioned earlier, the analytical data obtained during the Field Investigation are subject to extensive and stringent (QA/QC) standards, guaranteeing that data used for further RI/FS work will be of demonstrated reliability.

In addition to presenting the verified data and other information from the Field Investigation, the RI Report will contain an update of the Conceptual Site Model, based on the data and information obtained during the Field Investigation. The RI Report will also provide information on groundwater fate and transport, groundwater – surface water interactions, and the location of coal combustion by-products.

Once the RI Report is approved by U.S. EPA, the next step is to prepare the Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) and the Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA). These analyses will be conducted using data and information presented in the approved RI Report and prepared following U.S. EPA guidance.

## Technical Assistance Plan

As a reminder to the Pines community, the P.I.N.E.S was awarded a Technical Assistance Plan by the USEPA. This plan provides funding for the community to have a technical advisor as a resource, who can help explain the technical aspects of the investigation work being done in the Pines Area of Investigation. If you have any questions, or wish to discuss the technical aspects with this advisor, please contact the P.I.N.E.S. group.

### Our Commitment....

NIPSCO and Brown are committed to keeping you informed on the progress of the investigation of the Pines Area of Investigation. Look for future *Pines Updates* to update you to our progress. We also have a website to provide continual updates on the project:

[www.pinesupdate.com](http://www.pinesupdate.com)

Please contact the Communications Coordinator at the address listed below to be placed on the mailing list.

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### ***Pines Update #16, June 2007***

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