

Velsicol agrees to clean up pollution

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Consent decree puts an end to lawsuit

WORTON — Velsicol Chemical Corporation will clean up its act without admitting wrongdoing rather than contest a state lawsuit.

A consent decree announced Tuesday ends the lawsuit filed in circuit court last Oct. 31 by the state Attorney General's office. The state alleged that Velsicol released toxic chemicals into soil and groundwater.

The 23-page July 7 agreement says Velsicol will pay \$200,000 into the Maryland Clean Water Fund and take specific cleanup steps for the groundwater and the treated water it discharges into Morgnec Creek. There will be ongoing monitoring and quarterly reports to the Maryland Department of Environment.

By the third week of August, Velsi-

col is required to have a cleanup Web site for the public, and to post all reports and plans there as PDF files within 10 days of when they are sent to the MDE.

The company has 50 days from July 7 to report to the MDE on past cleanup efforts.

The chemical plant is on about 24 acres on land zoned Industrial between

Worton and the county's industrial park. Wastewater and stormwater enters a ditch, crosses under Route 297 to a large farm pond, and flows into Morgnec Creek and the Chester River.

Velsicol bought the factory in 1994 from Hüls America Inc. Before present ownership and dating back to the 1950s, unlined impoundments were used for industrial wastewater. That water carried pollutants into the

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delighted we
got credit where
credit is due."**

— Bob Parks
Executive Director,
Chester River
Association

