Challenges and Successful Asbestos Abatement for Nine Box Cars

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CSX Transportation (CSXT) utilized nine retired box cars in Selkirk, NY for material and general storage. The cars were located on tracks in a remote area of the yard and previous surveys of the box cars had identified the presence of asbestos-containing mastics, sealants, and paints. In the summer of 2014, CSX Environmental Department was made aware of track expansion plans scheduled for the area where the box cars were located. The relocation of the nine box cars became time sensitive due to the track expansion schedule provided by the CSX Engineering Department.

Inspections by the CSX Mechanical Department concluded that none of the box cars could be relocated to a different area by track due to their condition. The box cars could also not be scrapped onsite without addressing the asbestos containing materials. A previous abatement project involving a similar box car, conducted in 2012, proved to be a very costly and lengthy process due to regulatory requirements under New York Asbestos Code Rule and the transportation and disposal of asbestos-containing metal.

One solution that offered both cost and time saving advantages was to relocate all nine box cars by flatbed wreck cars; transporting them to Waycross, GA where abatement activities could be performed under EPA regulatory requirements without the need to expedite removal activities. This option allowed for CSX to conduct full-scale abatement activities enabling the cars to be scrapped onsite; minimizing transportation and disposal cost and resulting in cost recovery through the sale of clean steel for recycling.

In order to achieve project success, multiple internal CSX departments and contractors had to work as a cohesive team. Emergency flatbed wreck cars were obtained from the Department of Defense and the box cars were prepared for relocation. Abscope Environmental, under direction of CB&I, conducted preliminary asbestos abatement activities in order to stabilize asbestos mastic located under the box cars. Once stabilized, RJ Corman was used to hoist the cars from their trucks and secure them for transport on the flatbed wreck cars. Once the cars were certified for transport, they were sent by rail to Waycross, GA.

Upon arrival in Waycross, GA, the box cars were hoisted off the flatbed wreck cars by Hulcher Services, Inc. and positioned on their side to allow easy access to the asbestos containing materials. Abatement activities were conducted by Simpson Environmental Services, Inc. and project monitoring was provided by CB&I. Immediately following the asbestos abatement activities the box cars were sold to a recycling company by CSX Investment Recovery and the cars were cut up onsite to process for transport.

This project is unique due to the multiple CSX departments and contractors having to participate under short notice to support the Engineering Department's track expansion project. This approach resulted in significant cost and time savings since it did not have to be conducted under New York State Industrial Code Rule 56 but rather less stringent EPA regulatory guidelines. In addition, instead of having to landfill the metal, the asbestos was completely removed which generated a recyclable commodity resulting in project cost recovery.