



2023-07-07 MBK 4m3 Tailings

GN reference #: 2023-295

Please find the following information as a follow up to the Spill report submitted July 8th, 2023, by Agnico Eagle Meadowbank division. This detailed report is submitted to the Inspector in compliance with the conditions under the Nunavut Water Board License 2AM-MEA1530, Part H, Item 8c.

Spill Description

During maintenance of the tailings line at Meadowbank, a draining "pig" got stuck in the line. After an assessment of the tailings line to determine where the blockage occurred, the tailings line was disconnected at a flange to retrieve the "pig" and the tailings remaining in the line spilled onto the ground at the intersection of the west road and saddle name #4 intersection. The area where the spill occurred drains towards the Tailings Storage Facility.



Spill Location: N 65'01'17.5" W 96'03'17.2" on IOL

There were no off-site impacts or discharges to any receiving watercourse. Distance to the closest lake is 675m to Second Portage Lake.

Cause of Spill

Blockage occurred when passing the draining pigs.

Remediation Actions

Before launching the draining pigs, two slurry pigs were introduced into the line to eliminate scaling and slurry buildup. As an added precaution, the line was then flushed with water for approximately 8 hours. Subsequently, draining pigs were deployed using air pressure to extract what was initially presumed to be water from the line but encountered an obstruction, causing them to get lodged in the pipeline. To address this issue, the tailings line was disconnected within the footprint of the Tailings Storage Facility. However, it was discovered that the obstruction was located further upstream, which compelled the operations team to open a flange away from the TSF vicinity. Prior to disconnecting the flange, a vacuum truck was on standby to collect as much residue as possible. Approximately 1 cubic meter of reclaim water and tailings residues was collected using the vacuum truck. The remaining contaminated material will be collected during the next scheduled maintenance operation.



Corrective measures

An investigation into the root causes of the spill has been completed. Currently, a thorough review of the routing of the tailings line is underway to identify topography areas of concern, which were identified as potentially contributing to the blockage. Moreover, the procedure for descaling tailings/contact water is being reviewed to provide comprehensive instructions on "pigging" a line prior to a shutdown. Furthermore, containment options are being evaluated to mitigate tailings being released onto the ground during the disconnection of flanges.

Closure


We trust that the above details described appropriately the spill incident that occurred at the Meadowbank site on July 7th, 2023, and the cleanup activities. Please contact the undersigned should you have any questions.



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