



EPA Stops Work for the Winter; Cleanup Resumes in the Spring

South Minneapolis Residential Soil Contamination Site

Minneapolis, Minnesota

November 2010

Contact information

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You can see official site documents at
these locations in Minneapolis:

Green Institute
2801 21st Ave. S., Suite 100

Minneapolis Police Department
Attn: Carla Nielson
1201-B E. Franklin Ave.

Minneapolis Central Library
300 Nicollet Mall, 2nd Floor

Minneapolis Public Library
East Lake Branch
2727 E. Lake St.

Visit EPA's website:
www.epa.gov/region5/sites/cmcheartland

If you know someone who needs
information in another language,
please contact Cheryl Allen. EPA can
provide documents in other languages
and supply translation services at
meetings if needed.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and its contractors are finishing cleanup work for the year as cold weather settles in. Except for touching up some yard bare spots with new seeding, major cleanup tasks such as soil excavations and landscape restorations are suspended until work resumes in the spring of 2011. In the fall of 2009, EPA began the final phase of arsenic cleanup at the South Minneapolis Residential Soil Contamination Superfund site. Our goal was to complete 340 properties this year before shutting down for the winter. We met that mark by removing contaminated soil from 354 of the 485 properties targeted. The rest will be done next year, likely starting in May.

EPA needs your help

We need everyone's cooperation to complete the project. This fall EPA is trying to make contact with owners of around 60 properties where cleanup is needed, but the owner has not yet responded to the Agency's access requests. We hope to get a signed access agreement from those properties in the coming months so cleanup can be done next spring. **The work is free of charge to the landowner.**

If a property owner is not willing to allow EPA to do the cleanup, it may be necessary to have a notice placed on the property records so that future buyers or residents are warned of the presence of contamination. In addition, a Minneapolis ordinance requires landlords to notify renters of sampling results and to permit EPA to perform cleanup at rental properties.¹ Most property owners are cooperating with the cleanup, but others should be aware that violating this section of the ordinance could be a cause for adverse license action by the city.

If you receive a mailing, telephone call or doorknob notice from EPA asking for access to conduct the cleanup, please sign and return the form. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have about the process. See the contact information in the left-hand box.

New homeowners may wonder if their property is within the site boundary and needs cleanup. You can check the map on EPA's website at www.epa.gov/region5/sites/cmcheartland/ or contact EPA.

Cleanup process

Here is a general outline of the steps EPA follows during the cleanup work:

- Get a signed access agreement from the property owner.
- Have an initial preconstruction meeting with the owner a couple of months (approximately) before work is expected to begin. In this meeting, EPA gathers information and develops the plan for that property. A landscape inventory and survey of physical features are performed to get information on the existing property conditions.
- Have a second preconstruction meeting with the property owner a couple of weeks (approximately) before work starts to get the owner's approval on the detailed plan.

¹ Minneapolis Code of Ordinance (Title 12, Chapter 244, Article IV, 244.275)

- Prepare the property for work. This includes locating utilities, removing and storing personal property from the work area, removing vegetation and installing control measures around the property such as orange construction fencing.
- Dig up and remove soil with arsenic levels higher than 25 parts arsenic per million parts soil (parts per million abbreviated ppm) in surface soil and higher than 95 ppm in deep soil. A part per million is a tiny amount, equal to one second in 12 days, but even small amounts of pollutants can cause health problems.
- Digging is done 1 foot from buildings, sidewalks, fences and other permanent structures to prevent damage. The soil is excavated to 6 inches deep under the drip line of trees, 1 foot in open or grassy areas and 18 inches in gardens.
- Take a sample (composite from five locations) to see if the remaining soil meets health standards. Dig up additional soil if necessary.
- Survey the property to check the excavation area and depth.
- Place clean dirt to within 6 inches (18 inches within gardens) of the surface in the excavation area and compact it to prevent settling while still allowing water to sink in.
- Place clean topsoil on the top 6 inches of yards (18 inches in gardens).
- Perform a final survey on the excavation area.
- Replace personal property removed from the work area and remove fencing and other control measures. If necessary, repair any items that were damaged.
- Landscape the property to return it as close as practical to the original conditions as discussed with the property owner.

The landscaper will water for six weeks to help establish grass and plants.

- Have a follow-up meeting with the property owner to make sure any outstanding issues have been resolved and to sign off that the work has been completed.

Please help EPA spread the word that this cleanup helps make the entire neighborhood a safer environment for all residents, especially children!

About the South Minneapolis site

The South Minneapolis Residential Soil Contamination site covers about 200 city blocks, mainly in the neighborhoods of Phillips, Powderhorn and Longfellow. The area is largely residential, with much of the housing built from the early 1900s through the 1930s. The site has been investigated for residential arsenic contamination, some of which may have drifted through the air from the former CMC Heartland Lite facility located in the neighborhood.

From 2004 to 2008, EPA cleaned up almost 200 properties with arsenic levels that posed an immediate threat to children. In September 2009, work began on cleaning up 485 additional properties with lower levels of arsenic in the soil.

EPA would be happy to attend a local group meeting to give an update on the cleanup process and site activities. Call Cheryl Allen (see box on P.1) to schedule.



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CONTAMINATION SITE: Cleanup Work Stops for Winter**