



# ABEX SUPERFUND SITE

## Community Update

**Abex Superfund Site, Portsmouth, Virginia****February 2018**

## EPA Conducts Five Year Review of ABEX Superfund Site

In May 2017, EPA conducted its fourth Five-Year Review of the Abex Superfund Site. The purpose of a Five-Year Review is to evaluate the implementation and performance of a remedy to determine if it continues to be protective of human health and the environment. In addition, Five-Year Review reports identify issues affecting protectiveness, if any, and document recommendations to address them. To view the Five-Year Review, please visit: <https://semspub.epa.gov/work/03/2243729.pdf>

To manage the site investigation and cleanup, EPA divided the site into two operable units (OUs). This Five-Year Review addresses OU1, which includes soil contamination around the former foundry and commercial properties near Henry Street. OU2 includes soils outside OU1 site area groundwater, site-wide surface water, and site-wide sediments. The fourth Five-Year Review concluded that the remedy for OU1 remains protective of human health and the environment.


## Site Background

The Abex Superfund Site is located in the eastern section of Portsmouth, Virginia. From 1928-1978, the Abex Corporation/Railroad Products Group (Abex) operated a factory that produced brass and bronze bearing for railroad cars (foundry). The former foundry area included five buildings and a former sand disposal area. During operations, the foundry recycled scrap railroad car bearings and produced new bearings.

In 1986, the EPA found high levels of lead resulting from the foundry operations in soils at the foundry property, as well as several neighboring residential lots. The nearby properties included the Washington Park Housing complex, the Effingham Playground, the Seventh Street Row Homes (adjacent to the foundry) and a two-square block area southwest of the foundry known as the Effingham Residential Area.

By 1990, EPA added the site to the National Priorities List, making the site eligible for federal funding to address contamination and classifying the site as a Superfund Site. In 1992, the remedy chosen was soil excavation and capping. Later, revisions were made to include land use controls. The site work for OU1 was completed in 1997.



 = Abex Site Boundary

*Below are before and after images of the Abex Site. The left shows conditions prior to cleanup, and the right shows conditions after the cleanup.*



### Questions? Contact Us

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## Ongoing Activity

Routine activities continue at the site which include monthly reports for the OU2 investigation at the site. Abex's contractor (Viridian Environmental Consultants) submits the monthly reports on site activity reports to EPA and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) for review. The City of Portsmouth notifies EPA when excavation permits are issued as required by the city ordinance.

## Upcoming Work

Abex's contractors are in the process of completing the Remedial Investigation, Risk Assessment, and Feasibility Study reports for OU2. Once the study is completed, a Proposed Remedial Action Plan to address groundwater, soil, and sediment contamination risk, if any, will be completed. The Proposed Remedial Action Plan will focus on final response actions necessary to address contamination. During this process, the community is invited to be a part of the decision making process for the cleanup plan. The Proposed Remedial Action Plan is expected to be completed in early 2019.

### Resources

To view the Abex Five-Year Review, please visit:

<https://semspub.epa.gov/work/03/2243729.pdf>

For more information about the Abex Superfund Site, please visit:

<https://www.epa.gov/superfund/abex>

For more information about EPA's Superfund Program:

<http://www.epa.gov/superfund>

This Is Superfund: A Community Guide to EPA's Superfund Program:

<http://semspub.epa.gov/work/11/175197.pdf>