
Lead Soil Cleanup Project Planned by U.S. EPA

East Pilsen Area Soils Site

Chicago, Illinois

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For more information

If you have questions, comments or need more information about the East Pilsen neighborhood lead cleanup project, contact one of these U.S. EPA team members:

For general questions

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800-621-8431, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30
p.m., weekdays.

Websites

*About the East Pilsen Area Soils
site:*

<https://www.epa.gov/il/east-pilsen-area-soils-site>

*About lead hazards and how to
avoid them:*

<https://www.epa.gov/lead/learn-about-lead>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is conducting the cleanup of lead-contaminated soil in up to 17 residential properties in the East Pilsen Area Soils site. The current cleanup schedule calls for work to last into next year with a pause during the winter months. U.S. EPA will contact property owners prior to each individual property cleanup.

Cleanup will consist of excavating contaminated dirt in the yards and gardens of homes with lead in surface soil greater than 400 milligrams of lead per kilogram of soil, abbreviated as mg/kg. Engineering controls such as dust suppression and monitoring will protect workers and residents. The soil will be disposed of at a licensed disposal facility. Yards will be filled in with clean soil and restored to their original condition as much as possible.

U.S. EPA is only cleaning up the specific residential yards that were sampled in 2013, with no additional sampling or cleanup planned. For other residents wondering about their yards, U.S. EPA continues to work closely with the city of Chicago and community organizations to address lead concerns in the neighborhood and to provide information about ways to reduce exposure from potential lead contamination.

Site description

The East Pilsen Area Soils site consists of about 145 acres and is located in the eastern portion of the Pilsen neighborhood in Chicago. It is to the north and east of a location U.S. EPA calls Operable Unit 2, or OU2, of another site, the Pilsen Area Soils site. The East Pilsen Area Soils site is bounded by West 16th Street to the north, South Sangamon Street and the Sangamon Corridor to the east, West Cermak Road and West 18th Place to the south, and South Allport Street and South Loomis Street to the west.

Site background

In 2013, 21 soil samples from 25 residential properties were collected within the East Pilsen Area Soils site. The target zone was part of the site assessment for the Pilsen Area Soils site conducted in 2013. All 17 residential properties had lead in surface soil greater than 400 mg/kg, with the highest concentration at 3,300 mg/kg.

U.S. EPA conducted several studies from 2013 to 2016 to determine the potential industrial sources – such as former foundry and smelting operations – for the East Pilsen Area Soils site contamination. These studies confirmed the source of lead was industrial, but no clear connection between the potential source material and the residential samples was found.

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In summary, the site contains residential properties with elevated levels of lead in surface soils. Because of that, there exists a potential for exposure of humans to lead, a hazardous substance. Lead exposure by inhalation and ingestion can have detrimental effects on

almost every organ and system in the human body. Off-site movement of the lead would greatly increase the potential exposure to nearby people, animals and the food chain. The cleanup is expected to cost nearly \$1 million.



Street map shows the boundaries of the East Pilsen Area Soils site. U.S. EPA is beginning a lead soil cleanup project at 17 properties this year.