

# NPL Site Narrative for Blackburn and Union Privileges

## BLACKBURN AND UNION PRIVILEGES Walpole, Massachusetts

Blackburn and Union Privileges (also referred to in historical documentation as the "South Street" site or "Shaffer Realty Trust" site) covers approximately 30 acres on South Street in Walpole, Norfolk County, Massachusetts. The area is primarily residential. Industrial and commercial facilities have been active on 6 of the estimated 24 lots since the 17th century, with the remainder being used as residential and non-commercial properties. Portions of the properties (principally the commercial properties) are currently owned by Shaffer Realty Nominee Trust and BIM Investment Trust.

Records identify the area occupied by these lots as "The Blackburn Privilege" and "The Union Factory Privilege" (later shortened to "Union Privilege"). These privileges were 2 of 10 original, distinct water privileges established along the Neponset River during the 17th century. The mill/factory established on the Union Factory Privilege produced snuff, iron, nails, cotton, and wool, and also functioned as a tannery. A dam on Blackburn Privilege generated power for production of machinery, cotton, yarn, batting, and lamp wicking.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, these privileges were used for a variety of industrial and commercial uses. The industrial processes used hazardous substances, including chromium, arsenic, and mercury.

In 1915, Standard Woven Fabric Co. began manufacturing asbestos brake linings on the commercial lots. The process started with the crushing of the raw asbestos. A pile of asbestos waste materials remains on the site. In 1920, the company changed its name to Multibestos. Operations ceased in 1937, when the properties were sold to Kendall Co.

Kendall operations involved the washing, scouring, and bleaching of cotton, followed by fabric production involving carding, washing, rinsing, drying, and winding. Waste water from the cotton operations was brought within sewer permit requirements for pH, then discharged to two lagoons, where the cotton fibers settled out before the water was discharged to the sanitary sewer. Use of Lagoon No. 1 stopped in 1982. Lagoon No. 2 continued to receive non-contact cooling water until approximately 1985.

On December 15, 1988, under CERCLA Section 106(a), EPA issued an order requiring Shaffer Realty Nominee Trust and BIM Investment Trust to conduct a removal action at the site. During the response to the order, the companies' contractor detected elevated concentrations of asbestos, lead, arsenic, nickel, and other inorganic elements, as well as volatile and non-volatile organic compounds, in on-site soils, sediments, and ground water. Municipal wells drawing on the School Meadow Brook/Mine Brook aquifer within 4 miles of the site provide drinking water to 19,500 residents of the Town of Walpole. The nearest well is 0.7 mile from the site.

The site is within the boundaries of the Neponset River drainage basin. The river borders the commercial properties on the lots' southern sides.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.