

Celebrating Success: The PJP Landfill Superfund Site Jersey City, New Jersey



Superfund
Redevelopment
Initiative



Billowing smoke from a subsurface landfill fire before cleanup. (Source: EPA)

"Restoring, protecting and preserving this natural habitat is a success for all!"

– Robert Menendez

US Senator from New Jersey



The LEED-certified Pulaski Distribution Center. (Source: EPA)

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Restored wetlands and wildlife along Sip Avenue Ditch. (Source: EPA)

The PJP Landfill Superfund site is home to a newly constructed warehouse and distribution center, continued commercial use, public open space and restored wetlands. Redevelopment of the site will continue bringing economic, ecological and recreational benefits to the Jersey City, New Jersey, community.

The 87-acre site is located along the Hackensack River. In 1932, the New Jersey Department of Transportation built a portion of the Pulaski Skyway above the site. From 1970 to 1974, the PJP Landfill Company ran a commercial landfill at the site, accepting chemical and industrial wastes. Available information suggests that illegal dumping continued until 1984. From 1970 to 1985, the landfill had frequent subsurface fires, and in 1982, EPA added the site to the Superfund program's National Priorities List. Sampling showed that waste disposal practices had contaminated soil, sediment and groundwater.

Between 1985 and 1986, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) put out subsurface fires and capped a 45-acre area of the site to address immediate concerns. NJDEP excavated and re-compacted over one million cubic yards of contaminated materials. Cleanup also included off-site disposal of contaminated soil, cylinders and drums, and installation of a gas venting system, drainage ditches and a firebreak trench for the capped area. When outside parties expressed interest in buying the site property and redeveloping the area, NJDEP and EPA worked with them to redesign the cap to allow for development.

The site's proximity to New York City and major transportation routes made it attractive to businesses looking for development opportunities. AMB purchased 51.4 acres of the site with plans to build a large warehouse on the property. Extensive coordination between EPA, NJDEP and AMB integrated remedy and reuse considerations into construction of the warehouse. AMB started work in 2008, removing about 6,500 tires, installing groundwater monitoring wells and constructing a cap into the warehouse foundation. Through a merger with AMB, Prologis acquired the AMB property in 2011. In 2014, Prologis finished building the Pulaski Distribution Center, a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)-certified warehouse for retail packaging and distribution operations, on the site. Prologis leases the distribution center and warehouse to two tenants, Imperial Bag & Paper Co. and Peapod. Other commercial and industrial uses of the site include a trucking business and a truck stop. As of 2016, site businesses employed about 1,225 people, providing estimated annual employment income of nearly \$51 million. Prologis also developed a waterfront walkway along the Hackensack River, where on-site employees can enjoy riverfront views and watch wildlife, including deer and waterfowl.

Waste Management of New Jersey (WMNJ), one of the site's potentially responsible parties (PRP), cleaned up about 32 acres on the northern part of the Site. Cleanup included landfill capping and restoration of wetlands. Jersey City purchased this land from a private owner in 2010 for future public recreational use and took full ownership after WMNJ completed the cleanup. The City's goal is to create green space and a park under the Pulaski Skyway – the Skyway Park. The park is in the planning phase. Park facilities could include soccer fields, tennis courts and other recreation facilities. The park will address a community need for waterfront access and recreational amenities. To facilitate safe access to the Hackensack River, Jersey City is also considering a walkway over the road that separates the site from nearby residential communities.