

EPA Finalizes Cleanup Plan for AVX Property Groundwater Contamination at Olean Well Field Superfund Site

Olean, New York

NOVEMBER 2022



Final Cleanup Plan

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized its [plan to clean up contaminated groundwater](#) at a portion of the Olean Well Field Superfund site, south of the former AVX Corporation property in Olean, New York. EPA will construct and install multiple wells to inject specific chemicals into the contaminated groundwater to break down volatile organic compound (VOC) into less harmful substances. EPA will restrict the community from using the groundwater while the levels of contamination are monitored to make sure they are decreasing. EPA is working on the engineering design for the cleanup.



Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are gases from certain solids or liquids and include a variety of chemicals, some of which may have short- and long-term adverse health effects.

Public Input

EPA held a public meeting in July 2022 to explain its cleanup proposal and request public comments on the plan. EPA's [selected cleanup plan](#) includes responses to public comments.

Site Background

The Olean Well Field Superfund site, located in Olean, New York, includes residential areas and manufacturing facilities. The Allegheny River and two of its tributaries, the Olean and Haskell creeks, flow through the site. Past industrial operations from four properties within the site contaminated the soil and

THE SUPERFUND REMEDIAL PROCESS

ASSESSMENT



Discovery of Contamination



Preliminary Assessment



Site Inspection



National Priorities List (NPL)
Site Listing

CHARACTERIZATION



Remedial Investigation/
Feasibility Study & Proposed
Plan



SELECTION OF REMEDY
Record of Decision

CLEANUP



Remedial Design



Remedial Action



POST-CONSTRUCTION
Operation and Maintenance



NPL Deletion

Community involvement and planning for a site's redevelopment are integral to the entire process

Five-Year Reviews

groundwater with VOCs. The site was added to EPA's National Priorities List in 1983.

Olean city officials discovered VOCs at the site in 1981 and later installed treatment units for drinking water on private wells. Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs), with EPA's direction and oversight, also installed treatment systems on public wells to reduce the contamination to levels that protect people's health. PRPs and EPA removed contaminated soil from certain properties within the site. The PRPs, with EPA's direction and oversight, extended the city water lines from the town of Olean to approximately 93 homes that used to have private wells.

The city also extended the water mains to provide safe fire hydrants for the community and replaced or cleaned five thousand feet of sewer lines. A PRP called McGraw Edison repaired or replaced an industrial sewer at the former McGraw-Edison property with EPA oversight.

EPA identified four properties as sources of contamination to the groundwater, including Alcas (currently owned and operated by Cutco Corporation), McGraw Edison (currently owned and operated by Cooper Power Systems, LLC), the former Loohn's Dry Cleaners and Launderers property (currently a vacant lot), and the AVX property.

EPA issued a cleanup plan in 1996 for these four properties. Under the 1996 cleanup plan and with EPA oversight, Cooper Industries and McGraw Edison installed a groundwater pump and treatment system at the McGraw-Edison property. Additionally, EPA removed about 10,000 tons of contaminated soil from the Loohn's property where a dry-cleaning building was demolished.

Based on additional studies, EPA determined that the cleanup plan for the Alcas property would not be successful and the extent of contamination at the AVX property was not known at the time the cleanup plan was issued. EPA issued new cleanup plans for the Alcas and AVX properties in 2014 and 2015. At the Alcas facility, they will inject special chemicals that will make the VOCs in soil and groundwater less harmful. At the AVX property, which was an active facility at the time of the 2015 cleanup plan, the PRP will dig a trench to pump water out of the aquifer. AVX stopped its operations in Olean in 2018 and demolished its building. AVX is currently studying the contamination under the building slab and once that investigation is completed, EPA expects to issue a cleanup plan to address this contamination.



Information Repositories

EPA keeps site project information and reference materials for the public to read at local information repositories.

Copies of cleanup documents for Olean Wellfield Superfund site are available at:

Olean Public Library

Second and Laurens Streets
Olean, New York

You may also access cleanup documents on [EPA's site profile page](#).

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