

**EPA ANNOUNCES THE DELETION OF THE SMITHTOWN
GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION SUPERFUND SITE
FROM THE NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST
SMITHTOWN, NEW YORK**



AUGUST 2023

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has deleted the Smithtown Groundwater Contamination Superfund site in Smithtown, New York, from its Superfund National Priorities List (NPL). EPA sought public comment on the proposal to delete the site in February 2023. EPA addressed contaminated groundwater at the site by connecting people with impacted wells to an alternative source of drinking water, monitoring the groundwater in the long term and relying on existing restrictions on how the groundwater can be used. These measures have been successful, and groundwater contamination levels have now dropped to levels that meet federal and state drinking water standards.

The NPL includes some of the nation's most serious uncontrolled or abandoned releases of contamination. EPA deletes sites or parts of sites from the NPL when no further cleanup is required to protect people's health or the environment. Years, and sometimes decades, of complex investigation and cleanup work have gone into getting these sites to where they are today.

When hazardous substances and pollutants or contaminants remain on a site above levels that permit unlimited use and unrestricted exposure, EPA conducts follow-up reviews every five years—even after NPL deletion—to ensure Superfund cleanups continue to protect people and the environment. These reviews provide an opportunity to evaluate the cleanup plan to determine whether it remains protective.

Cleanup and Past Activities

EPA selected a cleanup plan in 2004 to clean up groundwater contaminated with perchloroethylene (PCE), a solvent used in dry cleaning and metal cleaning. Under this plan, homes affected by contamination were provided alternate water supplies, groundwater and surface water were monitored over the long-term, and existing groundwater use restrictions were relied on for future use of the groundwater.

Beginning in 2005, EPA installed service lines from the water company's distribution system at the property line to homes in the impacted area and disconnected personal wells. In addition, the water main was extended in order to connect additional homes that were not serviced by the existing main.

Perchloroethylene (PCE) is a manufactured chemical used for dry cleaning and metal degreasing and in the aerospace industry. Exposure to very high concentrations can cause dizziness, headaches, sleepiness, incoordination, confusion, nausea, unconsciousness, and even death.

More information can be found on the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry website:

www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts18.pdf

Deleting a site from the NPL occurs when the site cleanups are successfully implemented, and no further cleanup is required. At this site, the long-term monitoring program included groundwater sampling from a network of monitoring wells to monitor contaminant concentrations and migration overtime. In addition, five-year reviews for the site were performed from 2011 through 2020 to ensure that the cleanup was functioning properly. EPA determined after a third five-year review in November 2020 that the actions at the site protect people's health and the environment. Furthermore, the results of the long-term monitoring of groundwater and surface water demonstrated that the groundwater aquifer has been restored to meet state and federal drinking water standards. As a result, no additional five-year reviews will be required.

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 A CLEANUP PLAN



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

Background

The Smithtown Groundwater Contamination site, located in the villages of Nissequogue and Head of the Harbor, New York, addresses contaminated groundwater that affected local drinking water supplies. EPA provided service connections to the public water supply distribution system to residences in the impacted area. The agency also monitored the groundwater and surface water. EPA relied on existing state and local regulations to restrict future groundwater use.

While commercial and or residential septic systems were suspected to have been the source of the groundwater contamination, no specific facility was identified as the source of site contamination, so EPA listed the site on the NPL in January 1999 as an area-wide groundwater contamination site.

Before discovering the contaminated groundwater, residents of both villages used private wells for both drinking and irrigation. Currently, the majority of the residences within the site are connected to the public water supply. Water is provided by the Suffolk County Water Authority (SCWA) and the St. James Water Authority.

EPA instituted a long-term groundwater and surface water monitoring program in April 2009 to collect data on contaminant concentrations and movement at the site. Surface water samples collected from Stony Brook Harbor and the Nissequogue River consistently showed no detections of contaminants above the reporting levels. The groundwater monitoring sampling program has demonstrated that the cleanup goals for groundwater have been met, therefore, all monitoring has stopped.

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For general information or questions about EPA's Superfund program, please contact the EPA Regional Public Liaison: [George Zachos](mailto:zachos.george@epa.gov), zachos.george@epa.gov or (732) 321-6621 or toll free at (888) 283-7626.