EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency

WOLFF-ALPORT CHEMICAL COMPANY SUPERFUND CLEANUP UPDATE

RIDGEWOOD, NEW YORK

MAY 2025

Current Cleanup Work

Beginning in early May, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, or the EPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, or USACE, and contractors will be digging up and removing radiologically-contaminated soil at the Wolff-Alport Chemical Company Superfund site, located on Irving Avenue in Ridgewood, New York.

The EPA, USACE, and contractors will take approximately 10 months to dig up and remove radiologically contaminated soil. Beginning in fall 2025, the EPA will oversee the process of filling these areas with clean soil. The EPA expects all work related to this portion of the cleanup to be complete by early 2026.

Figure 1. Map of the former Wolff-Alport Chemical Company site.

Once the cleanup work is completed, property owners will be able to redevelop their properties within the existing zoning codes.

Upcoming Work in Your Neighborhood

Each weekday about eight trucks will travel to and from the property between the hours of 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. to transport materials to an EPA-approved disposal facility. The trucks will enter the former Wolff-Alport Chemical Company property at the intersection of Irving Ave. and Moffat St. and leave using Cooper Ave. They will then travel on Cooper Ave. to Rockaway Ave then on to Atlantic Ave.

Figure 2. Truck transporting material off-site.

The EPA will share any changes to these routes or other construction related acitvities that impact traffic or use of local roads, such as road closures, on the site's website and through the site's mailing list.

You can join the site's mailing list by visiting the EPA's website or by emailing greally.maya@epa.gov.

Health and Safety

To restrict access, the EPA has installed fencing around the entire property and is providing 24/7 security surveillance with a security guard on-duty during non-work hours.

Figure 3. Map of the areas where air monitors are placed.

The EPA worked with the USACE and its contractor to develop plans to protect the site workers and the surrounding community and to minimize dust and noise.

To control dust, the contractor will cover piles of debris and materials that are not actively being used, limit the speed of the equipment and vehicles on-site, place wind barriers, and spray dust-suppressants, such as water, as needed.

The contractor will inspect all trucks transporting materials off-site to ensure that the materials are securely contained before being allowed to leave the property.

During the cleanup, the contractor will monitor the air 24/7 at four strategic points on the northern, southern, eastern, and western boundaries of the property, as shown on the map to the left.

This monitoring will provide real-time information on the amount of dust in the air. If dust levels go above the EPA-approved maximum level, the site team will receive an alert immediately so that they can investigate the cause and pause work, if necessary.

Background

The site borders Queens and Brooklyn and includes the Wolff Alport Chemical property. The Wolff-Alport Chemical Company operated on the property from 1920 until 1954, processing monazite sand, which contains thorium. They disposed of the thorium waste on the property and in the sewers, which caused the current radiological contamination on the property.

After placing the site on the Superfund National Priorities List in 2014, the EPA determined that the best way to address the radiological contamination was to relocate the on-property commercial and residential tenants, demolish the on-property buildings, dig up radiologically-contaminated on- and off-property soil, and clean up the radiologically-impacted sewer system.

Thorium is a naturally occurring radioactive substance found in small amount in rocks, soil, and water. As thorium breaks down, it releases small amounts of radiation. Additional information about thorium can be found at www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts147.pdf.

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