



**THE EPA DELETES MERCURY REFINING INC.
SUPERFUND SITE FROM THE NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST
*TOWNS OF COLONIE & GUILDERLAND, NEW YORK***

FEBRUARY 2025



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is deleting the Mercury Refining, Inc. Superfund site in Colonie and Guilderland, New York from the National Priorities List, or NPL. The EPA has found that the cleanup work done at the site is protecting people and no further work is needed except continued monitoring.

The EPA has a long-term monitoring program in place to track the environmental conditions at the site over time. The EPA reviews the results of periodic groundwater and ecological monitoring that includes surface water, sediment and fish tissue sampling.

The EPA will conduct follow-up reviews every five years—even after NPL deletion—to ensure the cleanup continues to protect people and the environment. These reviews, known as Five-Year Reviews, provide an opportunity to evaluate completed cleanups to determine whether they remain protective.

What is the NPL?

The NPL includes some of the nation's most serious uncontrolled or abandoned releases of contamination.

The 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.

We Heard from You!

From August 16 to September 16, 2024, the EPA asked the public to comment on its intent to delete the site from the NPL. Information on the agency's notice of deletion can be found at www.epa.gov/superfund/mercury-refining.

Cleanup of the Site

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, or NYSDEC, sampled the site in 1981 and 1982 and found polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, and mercury contamination in soil on the southern edge of the site property and on the banks of the Patroon Creek tributary. The EPA placed the Mercury Refining site on the National Priorities List in 1983. The NYSDEC oversaw various cleanup actions at the site until the EPA assumed the lead for the cleanup in 1999.

Under an agreement with New York State, Mercury Refining Company, Inc., or MERECO, dug up and removed soil contaminated with mercury and PCBs. MERECO backfilled the excavated area with clean soil and covered it with a clay cap.

The EPA selected a cleanup plan for the site in 2008 that called for removing and treating soil and groundwater contaminated with mercury. The companies responsible for the contamination at the site performed the cleanup under EPA oversight.

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

During the first phase of the cleanup, contractors removed contaminated surface soil and sediment at the facility and in an unnamed tributary to the Patroon Creek. Workers removed approximately 5,700 tons of mercury-contaminated soil and sediment for disposal off-site.

The second phase of the cleanup targeted the deeper contaminated soil and groundwater. The cleanup plan called for using an in-situ or an in-place solidification/stabilization process. This process involved mixing the soil with Portland cement and a sulfur compound to prevent the mercury contaminated groundwater from migrating off site.

After the cleanup work, contractors filled in all of the excavated (dug up) areas with clean soil and re-planted with vegetation. Field staff completed all cleanup actions at the site in 2014.

Background

From about 1956 to 1998, Mercury Refining Company, Inc. used an industrial oven to recover mercury from mercury-containing materials, including batteries, thermometers, pressure regulators and dental amalgams. As a result of these activities, mercury and PCB-contaminated soil on site and mercury-contaminated stormwater drained off the site into an unnamed tributary to the Patroon Creek.

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www.epa.gov/superfund/mercury-refining

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