

# NPL Site Narrative for N.W. Mauthe Co., Inc.

## N.W. MAUTHE CO., INC. Appleton, Wisconsin

**Conditions at proposal (June 24, 1988):** The N.W. Mauthe Co., Inc., Site covers about 2 acres in a residential, commercial, and industrial area of Appleton, Outagamie County, Wisconsin. During 1946-76, the company conducted chrome plating operations on the site.

This site is being proposed as Wisconsin's top priority site.

EPA tests conducted in 1985 detected heavy metals, including chromium, and organic chemicals in on-site soil and monitoring wells. According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), the soil is contaminated to a depth of 13 feet. A large area (approximately one-half of a city block) of soil and ground water is now known to be contaminated. Apparently, discharges from leaky waste collection systems and other discharges by Mauthe, as well as the venting of plating tank vapors directly on the ground, cause the contamination. An estimated 11,000 people obtain drinking water from public and private wells within 3 miles of the site.

In 1982, chromium-containing ground water from the site entered the basement of a home with foundation drains. The ground water was discharged to storm sewers that lead to the Fox River. Within 3 miles of the site, Lake Winnebago, into which the Fox River drains, provides drinking water to 60,000 residents of Appleton. The Fox River flows toward the City of Green Bay and empties into Green Bay.

The site is unfenced, making it possible for people and animals to come into direct contact with hazardous substances.

In 1982, WDNR used its Hazardous Substance Spill Fund to install a system to collect shallow contaminated ground water (infiltrated surface water), and thus prevent surface ponding. A portion of the site has been covered with asphalt to limit surface water infiltration.

The State has filed a lawsuit against the owner of the Mauthe property seeking further remedies and recovery of Spill Fund monies expended. The suit is pending. The Wisconsin Supreme Court has found that the owner is liable under the State Spill Law.

**Status (March 31, 1989):** EPA is considering various alternatives for the site.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.