



Agreement Helps Start Project to Clean Up Contaminated Soil

U.S. Smelter and Lead Refinery Superfund Site

East Chicago, Indiana

November 2014

Attend a meeting

EPA will be holding two informational meetings in the neighborhood and you are invited to attend:

Tuesday, Nov. 18, 6 p.m.

Carrie Gosch Elementary School
455 E. 148th St.
East Chicago

Wednesday, Nov. 19, 6 p.m.

Riley Park Recreation Center
1005 E. Chicago Ave.
East Chicago

Contact information

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You may call the EPA toll-free at 800-621-8431, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., weekdays.

Access agreements

EPA may contact you and ask you to sign a document called an access agreement. The access agreement allows EPA to come onto your property to collect soil samples.

A project to clean up contaminated soil in parts of East Chicago's Calumet neighborhood will begin this month. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the state of Indiana recently reached an agreement with Atlantic Richfield Co. and E.I. Du Pont De Nemours and Co. for the two companies to fund the cleanup project.

Soil in the Calumet neighborhood, which is part of the USS Lead Superfund site, contains high levels of lead and arsenic. The areas EPA will clean up under this agreement are Zone 1 and Zone 3 (*see map, Page 2*).

Upcoming work

This month EPA begins planning and design work in Zone 1. Workers will be collecting soil samples at properties in the public housing area that were not previously tested. When sampling results are confirmed, EPA will identify which yards need to be cleaned up. Work to remove contaminated soil in Zone 1 yards is expected to begin in the spring of 2015.

Before work begins, EPA officials will meet with each property owner to discuss details of the cleanup on their property. In general, workers will dig up and remove contaminated soil up to two feet deep and replace it with clean soil, including six inches of topsoil. Then they will put seed or sod on the clean soil, restoring each yard to the condition it was in before work began – all at no cost to the homeowner. ARC and DuPont will transport the contaminated soil to a licensed landfill for proper disposal.

At the same time, EPA will start collecting soil samples from yards in Zone 3. Zone 2 will be cleaned up under a separate agreement.

Site location and history

The USS Lead site is made up of two areas called "operable units." Operable Unit 1, or OU1, is a 322-acre residential area bounded by East Chicago Avenue on the north, East 151st Street on the south, the Indiana Harbor Canal on the west and Parrish Avenue on the east. OU2 is the former USS Lead facility on 151st Street. EPA often divides sites into OUs based on how the land was used; in this case residential versus industrial use.


EPA started studying the site in June 2009, collecting soil samples from 88 of 1,271 properties to identify the type and amount of contamination. Another phase of the study described the cleanup options. The study was finalized in 2012.

On Nov. 30, 2012, EPA issued its final cleanup plan for OU1, the residential area. The plan includes removal and off-site disposal of soil with lead concentrations exceeding 400 milligrams per kilogram, or mg/kg, and arsenic concentrations exceeding 26 mg/kg, to two feet deep. Based on EPA's study, approximately 53 percent of the properties will need to be cleaned up. That would mean roughly 723 of 1,271 properties.



Map showing OUI, the residential area of the site. An agreement has been reached on cleanup work in Zones 1 and 3. Work in Zone 2 will be done under a separate agreement.

EPA Reaches an Agreement for Cleanup Activities

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