

Superfund Job Training Initiative

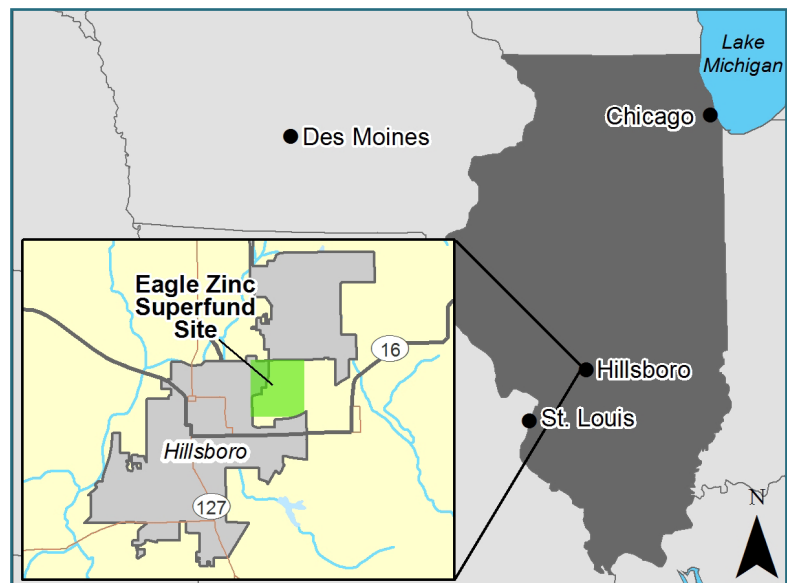


MAKING A DIFFERENCE AT THE EAGLE ZINC SUPERFUND SITE



Introduction

The Eagle Zinc Superfund Job Training Initiative (SuperJTI) is an environmental remediation job readiness program that provided career development opportunities for seven trainees living near the Eagle Zinc Superfund site in Hillsboro, Illinois. Through a partnership between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the City of Hillsboro, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, area organizations and remedial site contractors Environmental Restoration (ER) and ARDL, Eagle Zinc SuperJTI provided local job seekers with new skills, certifications and hands-on training linked to construction and cleanup. EPA's goal is to help ascertain employment opportunities available for affected communities during the cleanup and redevelopment process, and to provide the workforce development skills needed to take advantage of those opportunities.



A zinc smelter operated at the Eagle Zinc site from 1912 to 2003. (Map Sources: Esri, DeLorme, AND, Tele Atlas, First American, UNEP-WCMC and USGS.)

Outreach, Recruitment and Screening: March – April 2017

Eagle Zinc SuperJTI and EPA Region 5 staff reached out to the Hillsboro community by posting flyers and advertising on area radio stations and in local newspapers. The City of Hillsboro posted information on social media and two local organizations – Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation and Imagine Hillsboro – publicized the program to attract interested candidates. SuperJTI and EPA Region 5 staff hosted information sessions about the program in Hillsboro. In March and April 2017, 34 people attended the program's 10 information sessions and completed a preliminary testing process. Following these sessions, 20 people returned and submitted required documents. Sixteen people participated in program tryouts. The tryouts included leadership, team building and role-playing activities, a physical fitness evaluation, and observation by a team of evaluators from the program's partners. Seven of the nine trainees selected during tryouts went on to complete the program.

Training and Job Placement: April – May 2017

The four-week Eagle Zinc SuperJTI training program took place in Hillsboro. It included:

Pre-Employment Training: Trainees completed courses in environmental justice, interpersonal communication, building cultural competence and effective work habits. EPA contractor Skeo provided the training.

40-hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) Training: Trainees earned their HAZWOPER certification and learned about cleanup and safety topics such as environmental legislation and standards, toxicology, hazardous material site/spill control containment, and decontamination and isolation. Trainees participated in hands-on training scenarios using equipment and gear. Riverfront Safety & Health provided the HAZWOPER training.

40-Hour Asbestos Contractor/Supervisor Initial Course: Trainees earned their asbestos certification and learned about topics such as the health effects of asbestos exposure, use of respirators and protective clothing, glove-bag techniques for removal of pipe insulation, waste disposal requirements, and sampling and analysis techniques. The Safety Training Center provided the asbestos training.

CPR/First Aid: Trainees earned their CPR/First Aid certification and learned about topics such as soft tissue injuries, burns, shock, rescue breaths, methods to stop



Site Background

The 132-acre Eagle Zinc site is located in Hillsboro, Illinois, about 50 miles northeast of St. Louis. From 1912 to 2003, smelting and manufacturing of sulfuric acid, zinc oxide, and leaded zinc oxide took place on site. Facility operations resulted in contamination of site wastes, sediment and surface water with heavy metals. EPA placed the site on the Superfund program's National Priorities List in 2007. A short-term cleanup in 2009 demolished contaminated buildings, disposed of asbestos containing materials and wastes off site, and recycled steel, metal, bricks and other materials where possible.

The site's long-term remedy includes treatment of hazardous waste, consolidation and capping of treated waste and solid waste, sediment excavation and stream realignment, wetland removal and replacement, institutional controls to preserve the remedy's integrity and prevent exposure, and groundwater and surface water monitoring. EPA is overseeing the cleanup with support from Illinois EPA. The City of Hillsboro has indicated interest in acquiring the site property for use as an industrial park following cleanup.

bleeding, blood borne pathogens, poisoning, CPR, and injuries to muscles, bones and joints. Riverfront Safety & Health provided the CPR/First Aid training.

Upon completion of the program, SuperJTI provided the graduates' information to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and remedial site contractors Environmental Restoration and ARDL to help inform placement efforts. Through SuperJTI, trainees are provided with the marketable skills needed to begin a successful career in environmental remediation and become valuable members of the workforce in their community.

GRADUATE PROFILES



Christian Chandler

Inspired by the birth of his daughter, Christian Chandler was looking for new career opportunities. When he heard about an upcoming environmental remediation job training program nearby, he signed up for an information session. Following a rigorous selection process, Chandler was chosen as one of the program's trainees.

Christian particularly enjoyed the pre-employment training. "I learned a lot of life lessons during that time," he said. "It really gave me a new perspective on how I view the world and everything around me now." During the training, Chandler was recognized by his peers for his leadership skills – they selected him to speak at program graduation. "I have to admit, I was incredibly nervous for the speech. After I gave it, I felt I had come a long way as a person," he recalled. Chandler was hired immediately after graduation as an asbestos removal field worker by project partner Environmental Restoration. He greatly enjoys the work and is excited to continue to learn about environmental remediation. "Before the SuperJTI program, I was a delivery driver. I found it very difficult to make ends meet," he said. "Through my new job, I can better provide for my family, and especially my daughter."



Justin Gilbert

Justin Gilbert was looking to pursue new career opportunities. After seeing a newspaper ad for the Eagle Zinc SuperJTI program, he decided to attend an information session. He knew his previous work experience as a communications technician and coal miner meant he was likely well suited for environmental remediation work. Following the initial steps of the SuperJTI process, Justin was selected as one of the program's trainees.

"I learned a lot from every aspect of it," Justin said. "The pre-employment training is what I have applied most in my life, and I try to think about it every day." By the end of the program, Justin knew that the environmental remediation field remained a good fit with his interests and skills. "After the program, I felt very confident about getting in the field and beginning to work," he noted. "The training prepared us very well for this type of work." Justin is currently working with his father and uncle on housing restoration projects, and is looking for a position as an equipment operator.



Graduation for the program's seven trainees took place at the Challacombe House in Hillsboro in May 2017. Hillsboro Mayor Brian Sullivan and Kevin Adler, EPA Region 5 Remedial Response Section Chief, attended the ceremony and handed out certificates to the graduates. The ceremony included remarks from program partners as well as the graduates.

EAGLE ZINC SUPERJTI TRAINEES:

Live on or near the Eagle Zinc site: Fifty-seven percent of the trainees (4 people) live within 10 miles of the site. The remaining 43 percent of the trainees (3 people) live in neighboring counties.

Include a wide range of ages: Trainees included people in their late teens through to people in their 50s.



Eagle Zinc SuperJTI is one of many SuperJTI projects nationwide that are making a difference for citizens living in communities affected by Superfund sites.



What is the SuperJTI Program?

The Superfund Job Training Initiative, or SuperJTI, supports job readiness programs in communities affected by nearby Superfund sites and encourages the employment of trainees at local site cleanups.

The SuperJTI program combines extensive classroom instruction with hands-on exercises for each participant. Upon completion of the program, each participant possesses the marketable skills required to become a valuable member of the community's workforce.

EPA offers SuperJTI training at no cost to training participants.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

<https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-job-training-initiative>

Or contact SuperJTI's National Program Managers:

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