

Site Redevelopment Profile

Fletcher's Paint Works & Storage

21 Elm Street, Milford, New Hampshire 03055

Property Overview

Size

2 acres

Current Site Uses

- Public park
- Open-air performance venue

Use Restrictions

- Land uses restricted
- Groundwater use prohibited

Surrounding Population

6,378

1 MILE

18,251

3 MILES

31,191

5 MILES

Within a 1-mile radius of the site, 2% of the population is considered linguistically isolated, double the state average of 1%. At 7%, the population under age 5 is also higher than the state average of 5%.



Figure 1. The location of the Fletcher's Paint Works & Storage site in New Hampshire

Site History and Redevelopment Timeline

1948

Fletcher's Paint began manufacturing paint and other products on site. The company also operated a retail outlet.

1982-1984

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) found leaking and open drums on site. NHDES also discovered contamination in Keyes Municipal Water Supply Well.

1988-1991

EPA conducted initial removal actions, including the removal of drums containing hazardous materials. EPA added the site to the Superfund program's National Priorities List (NPL) in 1989. Two years later, the company ceased manufacturing and retail operations.

1996

The potentially responsible party (PRP), General Electric Company (GE), removed contaminated soil from the Elm Street area of the site.

2000-2001

EPA demolished the former Fletcher's Paint building.

2015-2017

GE performed soil cleanup activities at the Elm and Mill Street areas of the site. GE also removed contaminated sediment from the Souhegan River.

Present

Part of the site sits at the east entrance of Keyes Memorial Park and includes a portion of the cleaned-up Souhegan River. The space is home to an outdoor public performance stage built in 2019.

History and Cleanup

The 2-acre Fletcher's Paint Works & Storage Superfund site is in a densely populated area with homes and businesses in Milford, New Hampshire. The site includes a former plant and retail facility (the Elm Street area), a nearby storage facility to the south (the Mill Street area) and a portion of the Souhegan River. Since the late 1700s, the site has seen commercial and light industrial uses, and at one point was a town dump. Fletcher's Paint, a paint manufacturing plant and retail outlet, started operating on site around 1948. The company also manufactured perfumes, pesticides, asphalt and roofing materials. Companies supplied Fletcher's Paint with scrap pyranol, which it used in asphalt and roofing products. The company stored about 800 drums of hazardous materials in an unpaved parking lot at the site. The drums slowly deteriorated and leaked their contents into the ground. Site operations and storage practices contaminated soil, groundwater and nearby sediments in the Souhegan River.

In 1984, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) were found in the Keyes Municipal Water Supply Well, which supplied drinking water for town residents, sparking a series of investigations and cleanup activities. After identifying Fletcher's Paint as the contamination source, EPA carried out initial removal actions in 1988, including removal of the drums. EPA added the site to the NPL in 1989. EPA carried out more removal activities in 1991, 1993, 1995 and 2000, including building demolitions, fence installation and residential soil cleanup. Under EPA oversight, GE conducted additional site cleanup, including removing soil at the Mill Street area and backfilling it with clean soil and a grass cover. Cleanup activities at the Elm Street area included soil removal and an engineered soil and grass cover that allowed for recreational use. GE completed construction of the remedy in 2017. Groundwater monitoring is ongoing. In 2019, a settlement with GE allowed EPA to recover more than \$13 million in cleanup, oversight and legal costs.



22,210
cubic yards of
contaminated soil removed
from Elm Street area



9,945
cubic yards of
contaminated soil removed
from Mill Street area



1,500
cubic yards contaminated
sediment removed from
Souhegan River



Figure 2. An open-air venue was made partially of donated, locally quarried stone



Figure 3. Part of site cleanup included removing sediments from the Souhegan River

Redevelopment

Community engagement helped shape the site's return to beneficial use. EPA conducted a public meeting in 2012 and communicated extensively with town officials and residents during cleanup activities in 2016 and 2017 through a public meeting, email updates and door-to-door conversations. Town residents had long expressed interest in returning the site to passive recreational use. Ultimately, timely cleanup allowed the return of the site to that use. Today, the site is a public park. Early cleanup activities enabled the town of Milford to construct a Korean War memorial on a small piece of land at the site. The former plant area sits at the east entrance to Keyes Memorial Park, providing views of the cleaned-up, on-site bend in the Souhegan River. The area is also an entry point for locals heading to the park's adjacent recreation fields, swimming pool, tennis and basketball courts, and skate park.

In 2019, construction was completed on an open-air, public performance space at the site that was realized through community investment and a public-private partnership. The labor and materials for the construction of the all-purpose venue were donated, which included stones that had originally come from a local quarry. The stage's design replicated the original structure that the stones were carefully repurposed from, and the sourcing from the local quarry echoes the town's nickname, "Granite Town in the Granite State." Today, the site is part of the larger recreation space, offering an open area and space to hear music performances and other events along the tree-lined banks of the Souhegan River.

Cleanup and collaboration among EPA, the PRP and local government – as well as the input and effort of community members and businesses – resulted in the creative and beneficial reuse of the site, enhancing recreation space in the community that identified that as a priority.



Figure 4. A part of the site sits at the east entrance of Keyes Memorial Park

Contacts

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