



American Thermostat Co. Superfund Site COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN



2024
April

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I. Introduction	1
Community Involvement at the American Thermostat Superfund Site.....	1
Section II. The Community	2
Site Overview	2
About the Community.....	3
Section III. Environmental Justice	5
EJScreen	5
Section IV. Our Partners.....	6
Section V. Overview of the CIP Process.....	7
Community Issues and Concerns.....	7
Section VI. Contaminants of Concern	9
Perchloroethylene (PCE)	9
Trichloroethylene (TCE).....	9
1,2-Dichloroethene (1,2-DCE)	9
Vinyl Chloride (VC)	9
Section VII. The Community Involvement Action Plan.....	10
Introduction to the Action Plan	10
Community Involvement Tools and Activities	10
Section VIII. Government and the Superfund Process	3
Federal Agencies	3
State Agencies.....	3
Local Government.....	4
Appendices	5
Appendix I: Superfund Remedial Process.....	5
Appendix II: Opportunities for Public Participation.....	7
Appendix III: EJ Screen	8
Appendix IV: Community Technical Assistance Resources.....	14
Appendix V: Information Repositories	15
Appendix VI: Site Reuse and Redevelopment.....	16
Appendix VII: Contact Information.....	17

Appendix VIII: Glossary.....	19
Appendix IX: Acronyms and Abbreviations	20

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

The goal of this Community Involvement Plan (CIP) is to encourage and facilitate community engagement during the upcoming investigation at the American Thermostat Co. Superfund site. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) selected a cleanup plan and conducted cleanup work at the site in the 1990's which included removing soil and treating groundwater contaminated with [volatile organic compounds](#) (VOCs). The EPA also extended the Catskill water district pipeline to a residential area near the site where New York State health personnel detected contamination in well water. The EPA prepared a Community Relations Plan in 1988 in advance of that work. This updated CIP has been developed as part of new investigation work that will begin at the site in 2024 to evaluate if there are additional sources of contamination at the site that need to be addressed.

The CIP describes how the EPA will involve the community and address local needs during the investigation process. The EPA and the community will work together by using the tools described in this plan. Active public involvement is crucial to the success of any project. The EPA's community involvement activities at the site are designed to inform the public of all investigation and cleanup activities and include the community in the decision-making process.

The EPA defines the "community" as those people and entities who have an interest in or are affected by the site. The EPA also recognizes that other stakeholders, including local, state, and federal agencies, may have an interest in the site. This CIP is based on community interviews with community representatives conducted in fall and winter 2023/2024. This CIP is a "living document," meaning that it can be updated or revised over the course of the Superfund process to reflect long-term changes in the community.

Community Involvement at the American Thermostat Superfund Site

Active and participatory community involvement is an important part of the cleanup process. It is also regulated under the [Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act](#) (CERCLA), also known as "Superfund." This CIP follows community involvement requirements in the [Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act of 1986](#) (SARA) §117 and [the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan](#) (NCP) §300.430. The EPA's Community Involvement Program is designed to facilitate participation of community members throughout the cleanup process, including the investigation phase and the cleanup selection phase. The EPA works closely with state and local agencies to provide community involvement throughout the Superfund process.

SECTION II. THE COMMUNITY

Site Overview

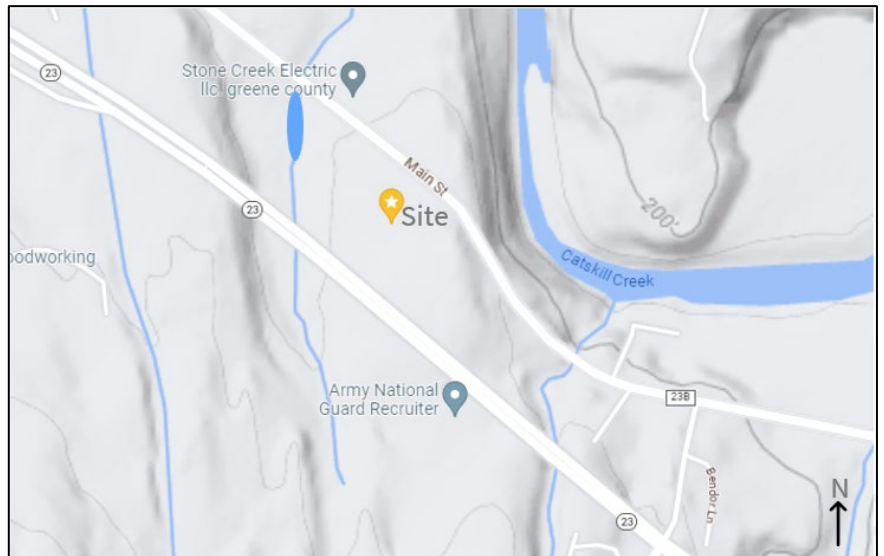
The American Thermostat Company built thermostats for small appliances at an eight-acre manufacturing facility in Catskill, Greene County, New York from 1954 to 1985. While the plant was operating, American Thermostat was the primary employer in the South Cairo/Catskill area. From the 1960s until the early 1980s, employees dumped waste sludge, which included degreasers containing [tetrachloroethene](#) (PCE) and [trichloroethene](#) (TCE), on the plant's grounds to control dust and poured the waste material down sewer drains inside the facility. These interior drains were connected to the plant's septic system and discharged directly into the tributary of the Catskill Creek. American Thermostat disposed of industrial waste in this manner for 10 years without the required New York State permits.

In 1981, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) discovered that American Thermostat employees were improperly disposing of chemicals at the facility. State health personnel tested drinking water wells at homes near the site and found that they were contaminated with TCE and other VOCs, including PCE. After almost two years of investigation and lawsuits, the EPA added the American Thermostat Co. site to its [National Priorities List](#) (NPL) of hazardous waste sites in 1983 making it eligible for Superfund money for investigation and cleanup.

While the investigations at the site were ongoing, the EPA provided bottled water to residents whose wells were impacted by contamination at the site and installed individual water treatment systems where necessary.

The EPA selected a plan to provide clean water to residents near the site in 1988. The plan called for extending the existing Catskill water district pipeline to the affected and potentially affected areas. The EPA completed construction of the water pipeline in 1992.

After performing an investigation to determine the nature and extent of the contamination at the site and to evaluate cleanup options, in 1990, the EPA selected a cleanup plan to address contamination in soil, sediment, surface water, groundwater, and on-site buildings. The EPA's cleanup plan included decontaminating the building located on the property; excavating, thermally treating, and replacing the contaminated soil; and extracting the contaminated



Part of the old American Thermostat Co. building at the site

groundwater and using air stripping and carbon adsorption to treat it. Air stripping is the process of moving air through contaminated groundwater or surface water in an above-ground treatment system. Carbon adsorption is a treatment system that removes contaminants by forcing water through tanks containing carbon, which attracts and retains contaminants.

The EPA decontaminated the building in 1992 and completed the soil cleanup in 1996. The groundwater extraction and treatment system began operating in 1998. The EPA operated the groundwater management system for 10 years until New York State assumed responsibility for its operation and maintenance in 2008.

The EPA is also monitoring soil vapor intrusion (SVI) at a home near the site. Vapor intrusion occurs when vapor-forming chemicals migrate from any subsurface source into an overlying building. The EPA installed a cover over a sump and sealed cracks in the slab at a home where SVI was detected. Flooding in this home damaged the electrical system and sump cover. The NYSDEC will perform follow-up SVI testing once the homeowner reoccupies the residence and repairs the electrical system.

Since the Superfund cleanup work was performed in the 1990s, the EPA has conducted long-term monitoring to track the environmental conditions at the site over time. These studies have shown that the levels of contaminants in groundwater remain elevated after more than 25 years of extracting and treating it. The EPA believes that there may be residual sources of contamination on-site. As a result, the EPA prepared a plan for a new investigation to look for that contamination and to evaluate how to address it. Beginning in 2024, the EPA will conduct a "Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study" (RI/FS) that will include collecting soil borings and taking soil and groundwater samples to identify any new sources of contamination. Soil borings are performed by drilling a hole in the ground to collect samples of soil and bedrock. The study will also evaluate cleanup options to address any contamination that is found. The study is expected to take about three (3) years to complete. If the EPA believes additional cleanup work is needed at the site, based on the results of the study, there will be an opportunity for the public to comment on the proposed cleanup plan (see [Appendix II](#)).

As previously mentioned, the EPA installed water treatment systems, called Point of Entry Treatment (POET) systems, on three individual residential wells, and one community water supply well (Country Estates Mobile Home Park) in South Cairo in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The EPA, and then NYSDEC, maintained the POET systems at the homes with the individual wells until 2022. Because sampling results showed that the well water at these homes met drinking water standards (since 2013), NYSDEC determined that the treatment systems were no longer necessary. Homeowners with the POET systems could keep the treatments systems in place, if they wished, but the responsibility for maintaining the POET system was transferred to the individual property owners. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) oversees the community water supply's compliance with state rules and regulations. This includes reviewing water monitoring data and maintenance information from the water supply's water treatment system.

For more information and site updates, please visit the [EPA site webpage](#).

About the Community

The old warehouse building associated with the former American Thermostat manufacturing facility lies within the town of Catskill, NY. The groundwater contamination from the site has historically impacted groundwater in both Catskill and South Cairo, NY.

The Town of Catskill is located adjacent to South Cairo and is a rural town with beautiful views and scenery. The town is the largest in Greene County. The Town of Catskill has a well-defined main street and is home to 11,298 residents according to the [2020 Census](#). People 65 years or older make up 22.6 percent of the population. Persons under 18 make up 18.4 percent of the population. The majority of people in the Town of Catskill are white (82.6 percent); the remaining population is comprised of approximately 0.5 percent American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.5 percent Asian, 7.9 percent Black or African American, 8.8 percent Hispanic or Latino, and 4.4 percent two or more races. The Town of Catskill government consists of four Council

members elected at large as well as a Town Supervisor and Town Clerk. The Supervisor holds a four-year term, and the Council members each hold a four-year term. The Town Clerk also holds a four-year term.

South Cairo is one of eight hamlets within the Town of Cairo. The hamlet of South Cairo is governed by the Town of Cairo. According to the 2020 census, South Cairo has a population of 590 . South Cairo is a primarily rural area with a significant portion of the population above 60 years old (41.3 percent). Young adults make up 22.8 percent of the population. The majority of people in the Town of Cairo are white (88.8 percent); the remaining population is comprised of approximately 0.4 percent American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.8 percent Asian, 1.2 percent Black or African American, 1.5 percent Other Race, and 7.3 percent two or more races. The Town of Cairo government consists of a Supervisor and four Council members elected at large. The Supervisor holds a two-year term, and the council members each hold a four-year term.

SECTION III. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental Justice (EJ) is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

EPA Region 2 programs collaborate closely to make sure underserved, low income and tribal communities facing disproportionate environmental risks have opportunities for meaningful participation in environmental decision-making. Region 2 also coordinates closely with EPA Headquarters and states to support initiatives that provide all people living near Superfund sites with technical assistance, training opportunities and other services. The EPA has a variety of [environmental justice](#) resources available, including:

- [Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program](#) provides funding for eligible applicants for projects that address local environmental and public health issues in an affected community. The program assists recipients in building collaborative partnerships to help them understand and address environmental and public health concerns in their communities.
- [Environmental Justice Small Grants Program](#) supports and empowers communities working on solutions to local environmental and public health issues. The program helps communities understand and address exposure to multiple environmental harms and risks.

EJScreen

[EJScreen](#) is the EPA's environmental justice screening and mapping tool that uses nationally-consistent data to highlight vulnerable communities overburdened by pollution. The tool provides summarized and detailed information at high resolution for both socioeconomic and environmental indicators. The EPA conducted an EJScreen analysis for the site in 2023. Additional information about EJ Screen and the EPA's analysis is included in [Appendix III](#).

SECTION IV. OUR PARTNERS

The EPA has been working in partnership with the NYSDEC to address contamination at the site and to operate and maintain the on-site groundwater treatment system. The cleanup plan the EPA selected in 1990 included an active Groundwater Extraction and Treatment System, which has been operating since 1998. The EPA managed the treatment system for 10 years. In 2008, NYSDEC took over operation and maintenance of the system. The EPA and NYSDEC will continue to work together throughout the investigation process, which will be led by the EPA.

The EPA is also partnering with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to complete the investigation work for the site. The USACE acts as the contracting agent for all work carried out on the project. It also acts as the point of contact and a reviewer of all work carried out by subcontractors at the site. The USACE has worked with the subcontractor to develop an appropriate scope of work that meets project goals and will ensure that the planned site activities provide the information necessary to identify any residual contamination and to determine how to address that residual contamination, if found.

Key contacts including EPA project staff, site partners and elected officials are included in [Appendix VII](#).

SECTION V. OVERVIEW OF THE CIP PROCESS

The Community Involvement Plan (CIP) identifies the tools the EPA will use to promote public participation and awareness during the investigation process. Many of these tools are commonly used by the EPA at Superfund sites to actively engage the public and have been selected based on the identified community needs in the American Thermostats Co. Superfund site-area based on the recommendations of community leaders during a series of community interviews, and from feedback received during informal discussions with community members.

Community interviews are an important component of the plan and provide EPA staff with essential historical perspective and insight into the issues that are most important to the people impacted by Superfund cleanups. During community interviews, the EPA gathers a list of issues and questions the community is concerned about so that they can be considered during the cleanup process.

In fall 2023/winter 2024, the EPA project team conducted a series of informational briefings/interviews with local elected officials from the towns of Cairo and Catskill, NY.

The EPA asked them to identify the ways the community would like to receive information during the investigation process. This included a discussion of how the EPA can reach the largest number of people in the community who are interested in becoming involved in discussions about the investigation of the site.

All the community representatives that EPA spoke with were familiar with and knowledgeable about the history of the site and the work that has already been conducted. Because of the amount of time that has passed since the original cleanup work, the EPA wants to ensure that current and projected community needs are considered and included as part of the CIP.

Community Issues and Concerns

In fall 2023 and winter 2024, the EPA project team met with Town of Cairo Supervisor, Jason Watts, the former Town of Catskill Supervisor Dale Finch (term ending 12/31/23), and newly elected Catskill Supervisor Patrick McCulloch. The EPA scheduled the meetings to provide an opportunity to present information about the upcoming investigation at the site and to answer questions about the details of the work. During the meetings, the project team also asked about current and historic community perspectives about the site and how the EPA can keep people informed and involved during the investigation process.

An overview of the discussion topics and concerns raised during the meetings is below.



CLEANUP

- Community members are interested in the timeline for the investigation phase of work.
- There is general interest in the reason for the new investigation, what is being studied and the location of the study area.



WATER

- There is community interest in discussions about the availability of clean water.
Note: Groundwater is not a focus of the current on-site investigation. The current study is evaluating the potential for contamination to be remaining on the site property in the soil. Impacted or potentially impacted water users were connected to the Catskill water district pipeline or received treatment systems for their well water in the 1980s and 1990s.
- Not related to the American Thermostat Co. site: Community leaders talked about another local environmental issue: [per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances \(PFAS\)](#) contamination in Cairo water due to historical firefighting training activities (*PFAS is not a contaminant of concern at the American Thermostat Co. site).



METHOD OF COMMUNICATION

Suggested platforms to share project-related information:

- Town webpages and Facebook pages
- Town board meetings
- Mailings and email
- EPA informational meetings
- EPA webpage

Possible meeting locations/venues:

- Senior Center in Village of Catskill
- Leeds Fire Department

Media outlets:

- Porcupine Soup
- Daily Mail/HudsonValley360

SECTION VI. CONTAMINANTS OF CONCERN

PCE, TCE, [1,2-Dichloroethene](#) (1,2-DCE), and [vinyl chloride](#) (VC) are considered contaminants of concern (COCs) at the American Thermostat Co. site. COCs are chemicals that need to be addressed by a cleanup action because they pose a potential threat to human health or the environment.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) has a series of summaries about contaminants called [ToxFAQs](#) where you can find additional information about PCE, TCE, 1,2-DCE, and VC. EPA also has information available about [contaminants at Superfund sites](#).

Perchloroethylene (PCE)

Perchloroethylene (PCE, sometimes called perchloroethene, tetrachloroethylene, tetrachloroethene or PERC) is a COC at the American Thermostat Co. site. PCE is a volatile organic compound (VOC). This kind of organic chemical compound evaporates under normal indoor temperatures and pressure. PCE was once widely used in dry cleaning and metal degreasing.

Trichloroethylene (TCE)

Trichloroethylene (TCE, also known as trichloroethene) is a COC at the American Thermostat Co. site. TCE is a VOC. This kind of organic chemical compound evaporates under normal indoor temperatures and pressure. TCE is part of some industrial and commercial processes, including in dry cleaning facilities. It is one of the most common contaminants at Superfund sites.

1,2-Dichloroethene (1,2-DCE)

1,2-Dichloroethene is a COC at the American Thermostat Co. site. 1,2-DCE is a highly flammable colorless liquid with a sharp, harsh odor. It is used to produce solvents and in chemical mixtures. 1,2-DCE can break down into vinyl chloride. This substance occurs mainly in workplaces where it is made or used.

Vinyl Chloride (VC)

Vinyl chloride (VC) is a COC at the American Thermostat Co. site. VC is a colorless gas with a mild, sweet odor. It burns easily and it is not stable at high temperatures. This is a manufactured substance and can be formed when other substances, such as TCE and PCE, are broken down. VC is used to make PVC, which is used in a variety of plastic products.

SECTION VII. THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTION PLAN

Introduction to the Action Plan

The EPA's Action Plan has been tailored to the concerns and preferences of stakeholders affected by the American Thermostat Co. site. The EPA proposes to maintain open communication channels with all stakeholders and to communicate with them on a regular basis to provide updates on study progress.

- Community Involvement Objectives

The objectives of this CIP are to provide meaningful stakeholder communication. The EPA will conduct involvement activities that give opportunities for stakeholder dialog with EPA and that will allow clear messaging from the EPA to the public.

- Ongoing Communication

The EPA will continue to work with local elected officials, USACE, NYSDEC, community organizations and community members to ensure that any important updates or information regarding the site are shared directly with the public.

To sign up for the site email list, please contact romanowski.larisa@epa.gov

Community Involvement Tools and Activities

The EPA has identified and developed a variety of tools and activities to better engage with and involve the community. These tools will include providing periodic updates to town officials during informal informational briefings, participating in public meetings at selected project milestones and developing and distributing project Fact Sheets.

Webpage

The EPA will continue to maintain a webpage specifically for the American Thermostat Co. Superfund site. For past, current and future updates on the site, please visit: www.epa.gov/superfund/american-thermostat.

On the webpage, the EPA will:

- Provide an overview and history of the site and the EPA's involvement.
- Post updated information about the Superfund cleanup process to the public. New information will be featured under the Announcements and Key Topics section.
- Share site-related reports and documents with the public as they become available.
- Provide links to additional site-related resources.

The EPA also has other webpages available for information about the Superfund program and Region 2:

- National Superfund program: www.epa.gov/superfund
- EPA Region 2: www.epa.gov/aboutepa/epa-region-2
- Superfund Community Involvement: www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-community-involvement

Community Meetings

Based on availability, EPA staff may attend meetings held by community groups, local government and other organizations upon request to share information about the site and to address community questions, concerns, ideas and comments. To identify appropriate opportunities and venues to deliver information about the site, the EPA will work with the community to coordinate the meetings.

EPA-hosted Events

EPA staff may host meetings, workshops and/or open houses to share information with the community. Meetings will be held at a central location that is Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible and accessible by public transportation.

Virtual Meetings

EPA staff may host or participate in meetings virtually, as coordinated with the community. To best accommodate community members, EPA staff may provide options to participate by phone for people unable to join a web-based meeting. EPA staff may share meeting materials ahead of the meeting so people unable to view the presentation can follow along.

Briefings with Local Officials

EPA staff may brief Cairo and Catskill elected officials at their request and may request meetings with town officials to share information about EPA project plans and activities.

Informational Materials

To help share information and address community concerns about the site, EPA staff may collect, prepare and distribute user-friendly documents to help people understand site conditions. Project-specific fact sheets will be posted online on the [EPA site webpage](#), provided to people on the project email and/or mailing list and will be available through the Town of Cairo and Catskill.

Periodic Updates

EPA staff will develop and distribute information about the site on an as-needed basis. These will:

- Provide regular updates about the Superfund process.
- Notify the public about public meetings and availability sessions and public comment periods.
- Provide links to publicly available documents and other resources.

EPA staff will maintain and continue to build a site mailing list. If you would like to be on the EPA's mailing list to receive site updates via regular mail or electronically, please contact Larisa Romanowski (romanowski.larisa@epa.gov). Updates will also be available on the [EPA site webpage](#).

Formal Public Comment Periods

During the Superfund process, the EPA announces and opens public comment periods and encourages people to submit their input. The EPA accepts formal comments on several types of documents, including proposed cleanup plans, as well as when the EPA proposes a site for listing on or deletion from the NPL. The EPA considers all public comments in the Superfund decision-making process.

Public Comment Tips

Commenting is an important way to make your voice heard. Public comments can strengthen an environmental decision by providing the authoring agency with facts or perspectives lacking in the original draft. Commenting helps the EPA create an accurate and comprehensive document to support appropriate and informed decision-making.

- Prepare for commenting by familiarizing yourself with the scope of the issue and relevant laws.
- Identify your key issues and concerns.

- Identify allies who can help with the document review and understanding of the report and coordinate your comments with them to strengthen your message.
- Be specific with your comments, including what you think could improve the document, what you think is missing from the document, what you like about the document, and what parts you want to remain in the document.

Community Advisory Group (CAG)

CAGs provide a forum for community discussion of site-related issues and are made up of representatives of diverse community perspectives. Currently there is no Community Advisory Group (CAG) for this Superfund site. The EPA can provide services to the community to help with forming a CAG. Additional information about Community Technical Assistance Resources is included in [Appendix IV](#).

Technical Assistance

Upon request from the community, the EPA can provide guidance on available technical assistance programs. Providing independent technical assistance to communities helps people better understand technical issues related to a cleanup and key considerations for a site's future use. More information about technical assistance programs is available in [Appendix IV](#).

Translations

The EPA may provide written information about the site in English and in additional languages if requested.

Local Media Outlets

The EPA may provide site updates and information to local newspapers and radio and television stations. EPA staff will be available for interviews and will respond to media inquiries in a timely fashion. Inquiries from the news media should be directed to the EPA Region 2 Media Relations Branch at (212) 637-3660.

The EPA may publish public notices about meetings and other events in local newspapers and send notices to other local news outlets. The EPA may include the following media outlets as part of outreach and information delivery efforts.



Newspapers and Online News Provider

Register-Star and The Daily Mail: HudsonValley 360

<https://www.hudsonvalley360.com>

Hudson, NY 12534

(518) 828-1616

Wave Farm/WGXC

<https://wavefarm.org>

info@wavefarm.org

info@wgxc.org

(518) 662-2598

Porcupine Soup

<https://porcupinesoup.com>

(518) 821-3852

Newsroom:

news@porcupinesoup.com

Green County Pennysaver

<https://gcpennysaver.com/>

Kingston, NY 12401

(800) 836-7581

Mailing List

The EPA will build, maintain, and update a site mailing list. The EPA will develop the list based on meeting sign-in sheets, community interviews, and email and telephone inquiries. To be added to the mailing list, please send a request by email, telephone or regular mail to EPA Public Affairs Specialist Larisa Romanowski: (518) 407-0400, romanowski.larisa@epa.gov.

Social Media

The EPA will share site updates through Facebook, Twitter and other social media:



- [EPA Region 2 Facebook](#)
- [EPA Region 2 Twitter](#)

SECTION VIII. GOVERNMENT AND THE SUPERFUND PROCESS

The EPA administers the federal government’s Superfund program.¹ The EPA is part of the executive branch of our government – meaning the EPA implements and enforces federal laws and regulations. The Superfund program is supported by other EPA offices and government agencies. All relevant offices and agencies coordinate to address contaminated sites, protect human health and the environment, pursue those responsible for the contamination, and support redevelopment of cleaned-up sites to restore and revitalize communities. The following describes the roles and responsibilities of the government agencies that may be involved at the American Thermostat Co. site.

Federal Agencies

Federal agencies are created by laws passed by Congress or through presidential executive orders. Federal agencies determine how federal laws should be implemented across the United States and its territories. Each federal agency manages different laws, and their work only falls within the parameters of those laws. Multiple federal agencies may become involved to help address local situations, depending upon the agencies' mission and expertise.

 <p>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)</p> <p>https://www.epa.gov</p>	<p>The EPA manages the National Superfund Program, through its headquarters in Washington, D.C. and 10 regional offices. The EPA has the authority to clean up uncontrolled or abandoned releases of contamination, such as asbestos and lead, that pose a threat to public health and the environment, which includes – but is not limited to – sites on the NPL. The EPA’s Superfund program oversees long-term cleanups and short-term cleanups known as removal actions. Removal actions can be either emergency, time-critical or non-time-critical depending on the extent and type of contamination. The EPA is the lead agency for the American Thermostat Co. Superfund site and is performing the site investigation.</p>
 <p>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)</p> <p>https://www.usace.army.mil</p>	<p>USACE is part of the Department of Defense and provides engineering support for national security, economic stability and disaster resiliency. USACE also provides their expertise to support the Superfund program. The EPA is partnering with the USACE to complete the investigation work for the American Thermostat Co. site. The USACE acts as the contracting agent for all work carried out on the project. It also acts as the point of contact and a reviewer of all work carried out by subcontractors at the site.</p>

State Agencies

Each state government has its own constitution and state agencies and is responsible for enforcing local laws that are separate from federal laws. At Superfund sites, the EPA may enter into either cooperative agreements or contracts with state agencies to perform hazardous waste cleanup actions. A Superfund cooperative agreement is a legal agreement that provides for funds to be transferred from the EPA to a state or tribal government for cleanup activities. If the EPA is considering the [Superfund Alternative \(SA\)](#) approach for a site, the EPA consults with and receives approval from the state in which the site is located.

¹ There are also state Superfund programs that are different from the federal government’s Superfund program. This fact sheet focuses on agency responsibilities as they relate to the federal government’s Superfund program.



**New York State
Department of
Environmental
Conservation
(NYSDEC)**

<https://dec.ny.gov/>

At the American Thermostat site, the EPA is the lead agency and NYSDEC is the support agency. The EPA has been working in partnership with the NYSDEC to address contamination at the site and to operate and maintain the on-site groundwater treatment system. The cleanup plan the EPA selected in 1990 included an active Groundwater Extraction and Treatment System, which has been operating since 1998. The EPA managed the treatment system for 10 years. In 2008, NYSDEC took over operation and maintenance of the system. The EPA and the NYSDEC will continue to work together throughout the investigation process, which will be led by the EPA.



**New York State
Department of
Health
(NYSDOH)**

<https://www.health.ny.gov/>

New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has staff with expertise that can inform site-related public health issues, including regional office staff who can share local health information and perspectives. The NYSDOH reviews work plans and reports that are produced for the site. They provide comment on work plans and reports that relate to public health and the site. NYSDOH also responds to health-related community questions and concerns about the site.

Local Government

Local governments generally include counties (or boroughs or parishes) and municipalities (such as cities or towns). The EPA and state environmental agencies keep local officials aware of cleanup progress through telephone conversations, emails, in-person meetings and briefings. City and county government agencies may also provide key information about Superfund sites, including information on past site operations and parties that may have contributed to contamination.



Town of Cairo, NY

<https://townofcairo.com>

The Town of Cairo can direct community members to EPA project staff contacts and informational resources for more information.



Town of Catskill, NY

<https://www.townofcatskillny.gov>

The Town of Catskill can direct community members to EPA project staff contacts and informational resources for more information.

The site's Administrative Record, and copies of other informational materials and cleanup documents for the site are accessible at the Town of Catskill offices (see [Appendix V](#)).



Greene County, NY

<https://www.greenegovernment.com>

The American Thermostat Co. Superfund site is located in Greene County, New York.

The County can direct community members to EPA project staff contacts and informational resources for more information.

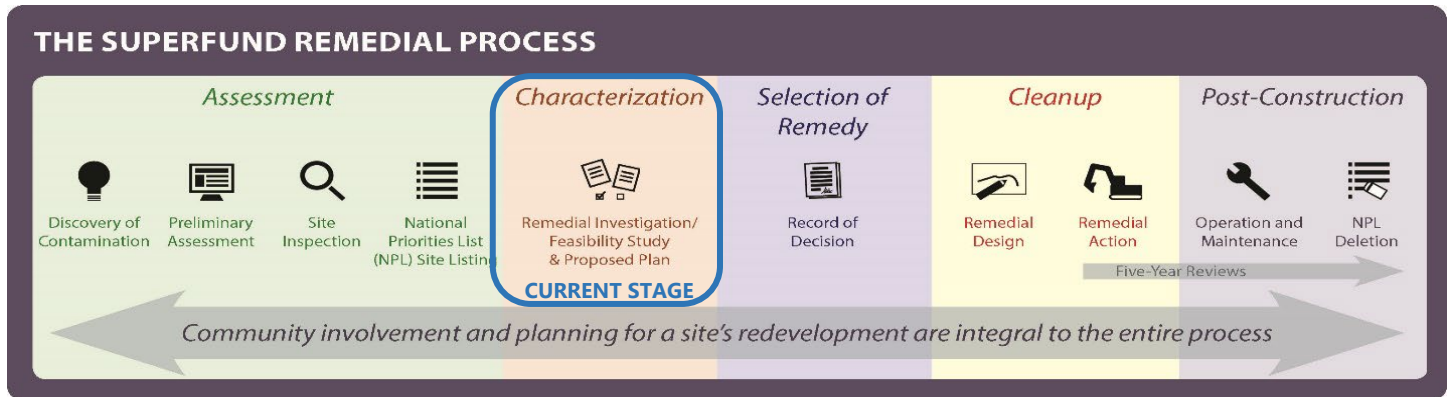
APPENDICES

Site Technical Overview

Additional detailed information about the site may be found on the [EPA site webpage](#).

Appendix I: Superfund Remedial Process

After Superfund sites are discovered or identified, the EPA uses two basic types of responses to manage polluted sites: removal actions and remedial actions. Removal actions handle emergency oil spills, chemical releases and short-term responses. Emergency actions eliminate immediate risks and ensure public safety. Remedial actions handle complex sites needing long-term responses. Remedial actions manage releases that do not pose an urgent threat to public health or the environment and do not require immediate action. Remedial actions require several years to study the problem, develop a permanent solution and clean up the hazardous waste. These are the sites that most people think of when they hear about the Superfund program. The section below describes the general steps in the EPA's Superfund remedial process.



Assessment

The EPA determines if a site poses a threat to people and the environment and whether hazards need to be addressed immediately or if additional site information will be collected. The EPA uses the information collected during the assessment phase of the Superfund process to score sites according to the danger they may pose to human health and the environment. If a site has a high enough score on the [Hazard Ranking System](#) and meets all other criteria, the EPA may propose it for listing on the NPL.

Characterization

Once a site is on the NPL, further investigation into the problems at the site and the best way to address them is required. This is called the remedial investigation and feasibility study (RI/FS). After developing cleanup alternatives, the EPA recommends the option it considers best for the site and offers it to the community for evaluation and comment in a Proposed Plan.

Selection of Remedy

The cleanup method ultimately chosen for the site, and the reasons for the selection, are documented in the Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD discusses all activities before selecting a cleanup method and describes how the cleanup method will be protective of people's health and the environment.

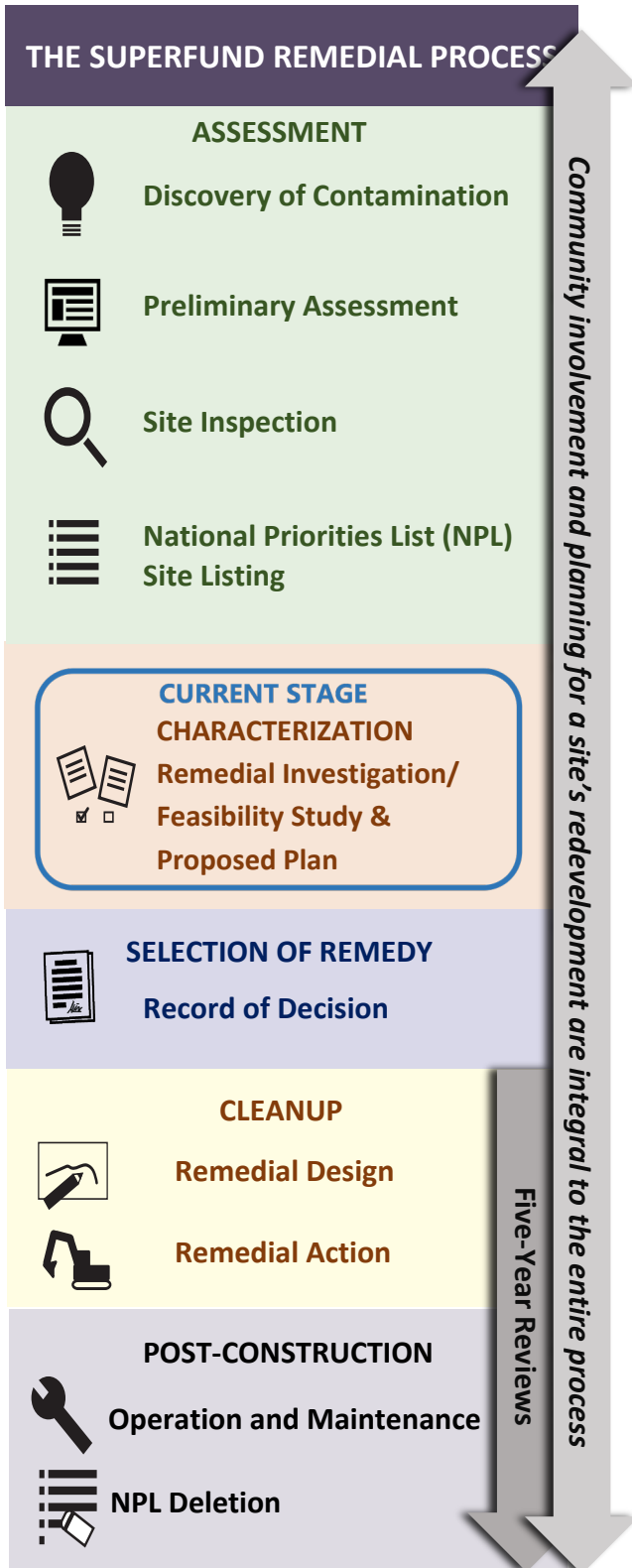
Cleanup

The cleanup phase includes two parts. During the remedial design phase, plans for the cleanup method are carefully designed. The remedial action starts the actual cleanup at a site.

Post-Construction

After the EPA determines that the physical construction at a site is complete, post-construction activities ensure that the cleanup actions will protect people's health and the environment over the long term. These activities may include routine maintenance at a site such as making sure signs and fences are intact or soil treatment systems are running smoothly. The EPA may delete a site or portion of a site (sometimes called an operable unit) from the NPL if all cleanup goals have been met and no further cleanup action is required to protect people's health and the environment.

Appendix II: Opportunities for Public Participation



Opportunities for engaging in the Superfund Process:

- Ask questions or request additional information by contacting the EPA site team.
- Participate in EPA public events.
- Visit the [EPA site webpage](#) to read site documents.
- Read information about the site in fact sheets, public notices and the [EPA site webpage](#).
- Invite EPA staff to attend community events to discuss the site.

Appendix III: EJ Screen

EJScreen

[EJScreen](#) is an environmental justice mapping and screening tool. It uses environmental indicators for a community to show potential exposures and demographic factors to show potential susceptibility. EJScreen puts each indicator or index in perspective by reporting the value as a percentile as compared to the state or nation.

The EPA conducted an EJScreen analysis for the American Thermostat Co. site in 2023 which evaluated the area within a one-mile radius of the Superfund site. The EJScreen Community Report is included in this Appendix. This report shows the values for environmental and demographic indicators and EJScreen Indexes. It shows environmental and demographic raw data (e.g., the estimated concentration of ozone in the air), and also shows what percentile each raw data value represents. These percentiles provide perspective on how the selected buffer area compared to the entire state, or nation. For example, if a given location is at the 95th percentile nationwide, this means that only 5 percent of the US population has a higher value than the average person in the buffer being analyzed. The EJ Screen Community Report for the American Thermostat Co. site-area found that one of the 13 indicators, Superfund Proximity, is close to the 80th percentile compared to the rest of the United States. This Superfund Proximity indicator is expected for this analysis because the Superfund site was the basis of the search and the geographic center of the search area.

The years for which is data are available vary across these indicators. Important caveats and uncertainties apply to this screening-level information, so it is essential to understand the limitations on appropriate interpretations and applications of these indicators. Please see EJScreen documentation for discussion of these issues before using reports. More information about environmental justice, including EPA grants and resources, is available on the [EPA's Environmental Justice webpage](#).

EJSCREEN QUICK FACTS

To summarize how environmental indicators and demographics come together in the same location, EJScreen uses EJ Indexes. EJScreen has 13 EJ Indexes that reflect the 13 environmental indicators below. In the EJ Indexes, environmental indicators are combined with information about the low-income and minority population in a Census block group. EJScreen presents results in terms of percentiles, allowing the community to be compared to the rest of the state, the EPA Region, or nation.

- National Scale Air Toxics Assessment Air Toxics Cancer Risk
- National Scale Air Toxics Assessment Respiratory Hazard Index (HI)
- National Scale Air Toxics Assessment Diesel Particulate Matter (DPM)
- Particulate Matter (PM2.5)
- Toxic Releases to Air
- Ozone
- Lead Paint Indicator
- Traffic Proximity and Volume
- Proximity to Risk Management Plan Sites
- Proximity to Hazardous Waste Facilities
- Proximity to NPL Sites
- Underground Storage Tanks Indicator
- Wastewater Discharge Indicator

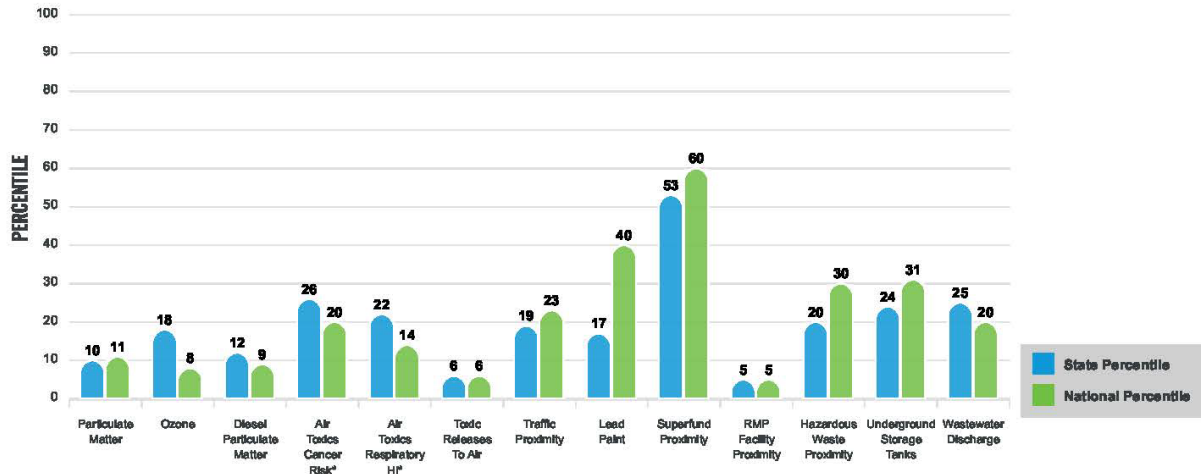
Environmental Justice & Supplemental Indexes

The environmental justice and supplemental indexes are a combination of environmental and socioeconomic information. There are thirteen EJ indexes and supplemental indexes in EJScreen reflecting the 13 environmental indicators. The indexes for a selected area are compared to those for all other locations in the state or nation. For more information and calculation details on the EJ and supplemental indexes, please visit the [EJScreen website](#).

EJ INDEXES

The EJ Indexes help users screen for potential EJ concerns. To do this, the EJ Index combines data on low income and people of color populations with a single environmental indicator.

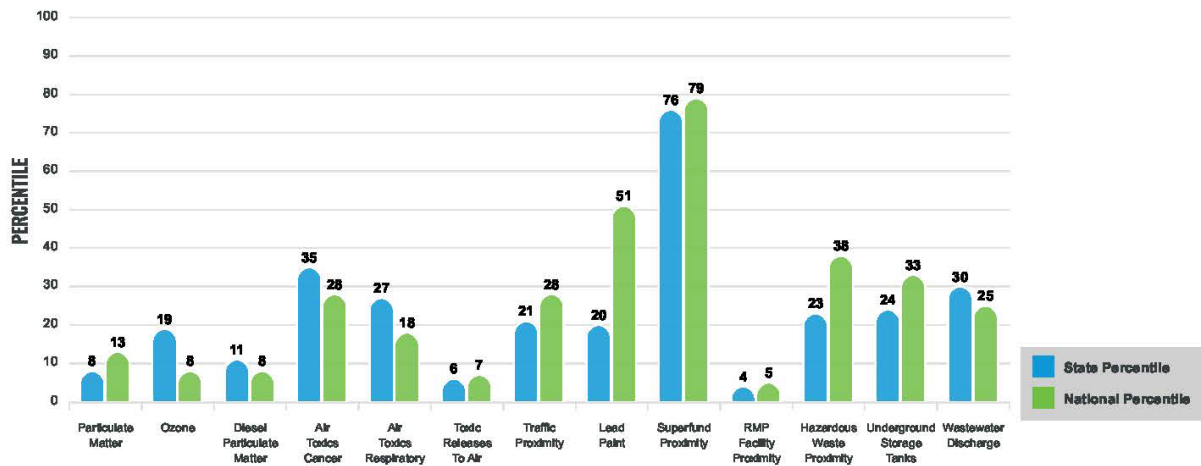
EJ INDEXES FOR THE SELECTED LOCATION



SUPPLEMENTAL INDEXES

The supplemental indexes offer a different perspective on community-level vulnerability. They combine data on percent low-income, percent linguistically isolated, percent less than high school education, percent unemployed, and low life expectancy with a single environmental indicator.

SUPPLEMENTAL INDEXES FOR THE SELECTED LOCATION



These percentiles provide perspective on how the selected block group or buffer area compares to the entire state or nation.

Report for 1 mile Ring Centered at 42.267188,-73.940988

EJScreen Environmental and Socioeconomic Indicators Data

SELECTED VARIABLES	VALUE	STATE AVERAGE	PERCENTILE IN STATE	USA AVERAGE	PERCENTILE IN USA
POLLUTION AND SOURCES					
Particulate Matter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)	6.33	7.71	6	8.08	11
Ozone (ppb)	54.4	62.6	13	61.6	7
Diesel Particulate Matter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)	0.0684	0.525	7	0.261	7
Air Toxics Cancer Risk* (lifetime risk per million)	20	25	5	25	5
Air Toxics Respiratory HI*	0.2	0.33	5	0.31	4
Toxic Releases to Air	4.9	450	4	4,600	7
Traffic Proximity (daily traffic count/distance to road)	19	430	15	210	23
Lead Paint (% Pre-1960 Housing)	0.22	0.55	16	0.3	50
Superfund Proximity (site count/km distance)	0.62	0.24	90	0.13	96
RMP Facility Proximity (facility count/km distance)	0.031	0.21	3	0.43	4
Hazardous Waste Proximity (facility count/km distance)	0.17	4.3	15	1.9	31
Underground Storage Tanks (count/km ²)	0.071	7.7	17	3.9	26
Wastewater Discharge (toxicity-weighted concentration/m distance)	2.3E-05	5	23	22	22
SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS					
Demographic Index	17%	35%	29	35%	26
Supplemental Demographic Index	12%	14%	49	14%	46
People of Color	4%	42%	13	39%	11
Low Income	30%	28%	61	31%	55
Unemployment Rate	3%	6%	37	6%	40
Limited English Speaking Households	0%	7%	0	5%	0
Less Than High School Education	12%	12%	61	12%	63
Under Age 5	9%	5%	83	6%	83
Over Age 64	23%	17%	76	17%	75
Low Life Expectancy	15%	17%	26	20%	12

*Diesel particulate matter, air toxics cancer risk, and air toxics respiratory hazard index are from the EPA's Air Toxics Data Update, which is the Agency's ongoing, comprehensive evaluation of air toxics in the United States. This effort aims to prioritize air toxics, emission sources, and locations of interest for further study. It is important to remember that the air toxics data presented here provide broad estimates of health risks over geographic areas of the country, not definitive risks to specific individuals or locations. Cancer risks and hazard indices from the Air Toxics Data Update are reported to one significant figure and any additional significant figures here are due to rounding. More information on the Air Toxics Data Update can be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/news/air-toxics-data-update>.

Sites reporting to EPA within defined area:

Superfund	1
Hazardous Waste, Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Facilities	0
Water Dischargers	1
Air Pollution	0
Brownfields	0
Toxic Release Inventory	0

Other community features within defined area:

Schools	0
Hospitals	0
Places of Worship	0

Other environmental data:

Air Non-attainment	Yes
Impaired Waters	Yes

Selected location contains American Indian Reservation Lands*	No
Selected location contains a "Justice40 (CEJST)" disadvantaged community	Yes
Selected location contains an EPA IRA disadvantaged community	Yes

Report for 1 mile Ring Centered at 42.267188,-73.940988

EJScreen Environmental and Socioeconomic Indicators Data

HEALTH INDICATORS					
INDICATOR	VALUE	STATE AVERAGE	STATE PERCENTILE	US AVERAGE	US PERCENTILE
Low Life Expectancy	15%	17%	25	20%	12
Heart Disease	6.9	5.6	83	6.1	67
Asthma	10.4	10	63	10	64
Cancer	7.4	6	76	6.1	76
Persons with Disabilities	14.2%	11.8%	70	13.4%	60

CLIMATE INDICATORS					
INDICATOR	VALUE	STATE AVERAGE	STATE PERCENTILE	US AVERAGE	US PERCENTILE
Flood Risk	13%	11%	74	12%	75
Wildfire Risk	0%	1%	0	14%	0

CRITICAL SERVICE GAPS					
INDICATOR	VALUE	STATE AVERAGE	STATE PERCENTILE	US AVERAGE	US PERCENTILE
Broadband Internet	23%	13%	83	14%	79
Lack of Health Insurance	3%	5%	33	9%	16
Housing Burden	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Transportation Access	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Food Desert	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Report for 1 mile Ring Centered at 42.267188,-73.940988

EJScreen is a screening tool for pre-decisional use only. It can help identify areas that may warrant additional consideration, analysis, or outreach. It does not provide a basis for decision-making, but it may help identify potential areas of EJ concern. Users should keep in mind that screening tools are subject to substantial uncertainty in their demographic and environmental data, particularly when looking at small geographic areas. This screening tool does not provide data on every environmental impact and demographic factor that may be relevant to a particular location. EJScreen outputs should be supplemented with additional information and local knowledge before taking any action to address potential EJ concerns.

Appendix IV: Community Technical Assistance Resources

The EPA provides additional assistance to communities through a variety of technical assistance resources. These resources include the [Technical Assistance Grant \(TAG\)](#) program, the [Technical Assistance Services for Communities \(TASC\)](#) program and [Community Advisory Group \(CAG\)](#) formation support. For more information on these resources, please visit: www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-technical-assistance-communities.

	TAG	TASC	CAG Formation Support
Overview of Program/Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awards grants to eligible community groups affected by the NPL sites and proposed NPL sites to contract with independent technical advisors to provide the services listed below. • Community groups must be able to manage a grant, be an incorporated non-profit and provide a 20% match, which can include in-kind services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides technical information assistance services through a national EPA contract. Services are provided at no cost to communities. • Suitable for communities with short- and long-term needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAGs provide a forum for community discussion of site-related issues and are made up of representatives of diverse community perspectives. • EPA can help with CAG formation and can provide facilitation support.
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and explain technical documents and information related to the site. • Comments on technical documents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and explain technical documents and information related to the site. • Comments on technical documents. • Community trainings and workshops. • Educational presentations. • Technical assistance needs assessments. • Facilitation of community meetings. • Technical advisor services during community meetings. • Outreach and educational materials for communities. • Assistance understanding the environmental decision-making process. • Language translations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informational meeting about CAGs. • Assistance in determining CAG size and membership. • Training for CAG members. • Administrative support and translation and meeting facilitation services.

Appendix V: Information Repositories



The EPA provides access to the site's Administrative Record and other project information at local information repositories. The Administrative Record is the collection of documents that forms the basis for the EPA's selection of cleanup actions. The Administrative Record, and copies of other informational materials and cleanup documents for the American Thermostat Co. Superfund site are available electronically on the [EPA site webpage](#) and can be accessed at the following locations:

Town of Catskill Office

439 Main Street

Catskill, NY 12414

(518)943-2141

Monday – Friday 9 AM – 4 PM

Contact: Elizabeth Izzo, <https://www.townofcatskillny.gov/town-clerk>

Village of Catskill Office

422 Main Street

Catskill, NY 12414

(518)943-3830

Monday – Friday 9 AM – 5 PM

Contact: Anna Signoretti, asignoretti@villageofcatskillny.gov

EPA Region 2 Superfund Records Center

290 Broadway, 18th Floor

New York, NY 10007-1866

(212)637-4308

Call to make appointment

Appendix VI: Site Reuse and Redevelopment

The EPA's goal is to make sure site cleanup is consistent with its likely future use. Consideration of reuse at a site can occur at any point in the Superfund cleanup process, from investigation activities to deletion from the NPL.

Community Involvement During Reuse and Redevelopment

The EPA works with the current landowner, local governments, community organizations, businesses, residents, and partners to consider the reuse of Superfund sites. Reuse planning enhances community engagement during Superfund cleanups by proactively including communities in the decision-making process.

EPA's [Superfund Redevelopment Program](#) webpage includes more information about the reuse planning and technical assistance resources that are available to communities.

Appendix VII: Contact Information

EPA and Site Partners

EPA Contacts

Claudia Shuman
EPA Remedial Project Manager
EPA Region 2
290 Broadway
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(212)637-4279
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Public Affairs Specialist
EPA Region 2 – Hudson River Office
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NY 12205
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Site Partner Contacts

Charles Gregory
Project Manager
NYSDEC
Division of Environmental
Remediation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233
(518) 402-8246
charles.gregory@dec.ny.gov

Todd Daniels
Project Manager
USACE, Kansas City District 601
E. 12th Street
Kansas City, MO 64106-2896
(816)389-3120
Todd.A.Daniels@usace.army.mil

Angela Martin
Project Manager
NYSDOH
Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237
(518)471-4671
Angela.Martin@health.ny.gov

Local Elected Officials

Patrick McCulloch
Catskill Town Supervisor
439 Main St
2nd Floor
Catskill, NY 12414
(518)943-2141 ext. 8 (office)
(518)943-0290 (fax)
supervisor@townofcatskillny.gov

Patrick McCulloch
Cairo Town Supervisor
P.O. Box 728
Cairo, NY 12413
(518)622-3120 ext. 113 (office)
(518)810-5866 (fax)
supervisor@townofcairo.com

Shaun S. Groden
Greene County Administrator
411 Main Street, 4th Floor
Suite 408
Catskill, NY 12414
(518)719-3270 (office)
(518)719-3793 (fax)
countyadministrator@greencountyny.gov

State and Federal Elected Officials

- U.S. House of Representatives. Visit www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative for contact information for your current congressional representative. The American Thermostat Co. site is in the 19th congressional district.
 - The Representative for this district as of 2024 is:
 - Marcus J. Molinaro (R)
- U.S. Senate. Visit www.senate.gov/senators for contact information for your current U.S. senators for New York State.
 - The Senators for this district as of 2024 are:
 - Kristen E. Gillibrand (D)
 - Charles E. Schumer (D)
- State House/Assembly. Visit <https://nyassembly.gov/mem/> for contact information for your current Assembly Member. The American Thermostat Co. site is in the 102nd district.
 - The Assembly Member for this district as of 2024 is:
 - Chris Tague (R)
- State Senate. Visit <https://www.nysenate.gov/> for contact information for your current senator. The American Thermostat Co. site is in the 41st district.
 - The Senator for this district as of 2024 is:
 - Michelle Hinchey (D)

Appendix VIII: Glossary

Contamination	Introduction into water, air, and soil of microorganisms, chemicals, toxic substances, wastes, or wastewater in a concentration that makes the medium unfit for its next intended use.
Groundwater	The supply of fresh water found beneath the Earth's surface, usually in aquifers, which supply wells and springs.
Information Repository	An information repository is a location in a public building that is convenient for local residents, such as a public school, city hall, or library, that contains information about a Superfund site, including technical reports and reference documents.
National Priorities List	EPA's list of the most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites identified for possible long-term remedial action under Superfund.
Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS)	The RI/FS phase of the Superfund process determines the nature and extent of contamination at the site, tests whether certain technologies are capable of treating the contamination and evaluates the cost and performance of technologies that could be used to clean up the site.
Volatile Organic Compound	A class of chemicals that are volatile (evaporate easily) and are organic compounds (contain carbon atoms). Some common VOCs include acetone and automotive gasoline.

Appendix IX: Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ATSDR	Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
CAG	Community Advisory Group
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CIP	Community Involvement Plan
COC	Contaminant of Concern
DPM	Diesel Particulate Matter
EJ	Environmental Justice
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
FS	Feasibility Study
GWETS	Groundwater Extraction and Treatment System
HI	Hazard Index
HRS	Hazard Ranking System
Km	kilometer
NCP	National Contingency Plan
NPL	National Priorities List
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
NYSDOH	New York State Department of Health
ppb	parts per billion
PCE	Tetrachloroethene
POET	Point of Entry Treatment
PM2.5	Particulate Matter
PRP	Potential Responsible Party
RI	Remedial Investigation
ROD	Record of Decision
SA	Superfund Alternative
SARA	Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act
SVI	Soil Vapor Intrusion
TAG	Technical Assistance Grant

TASC	Technical Assistance Services for Communities
TCE	Trichloroethene
ug/m3	micrograms per cubic meter
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound

