

**EPA BEGINS NEW INVESTIGATION AT  
AMERICAN THERMOSTAT CO. SUPERFUND SITE**

**SOUTH CAIRO, NEW YORK**

**DECEMBER 2023**



## Upcoming Activities

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is studying contamination remaining at the American Thermostat Co. Superfund site in South Cairo, New York. Because the levels of contaminants in the groundwater in certain areas have not decreased significantly after more than 25 years of extraction and treatment, EPA believes that there may be contamination remaining on-site.

EPA is currently preparing a plan for an investigation to look for residual contamination and, if found, to evaluate options to address it.

## Investigation Details

Beginning this winter, EPA will collect soil and groundwater samples to identify any sources of contamination. Soil samples will be taken from borings that are made by drilling a hole in the ground. EPA will collect 82 soil borings in rows around the former manufacturing building and on either side of Rt. 23. EPA will install groundwater monitoring wells to sample the groundwater quarterly, which will include testing for volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

If contamination is found, the study will also look at cleanup options to address it. The study is expected to take several years to complete. If EPA determines that 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.

## Background

The American Thermostat Co. built thermostats for small appliances at an eight-acre manufacturing facility from 1954 to 1985. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation discovered that American Thermostat employees were improperly disposing of chemicals at the facility in 1981. This led to VOC contamination in the soil and groundwater. EPA placed the site on the National Priorities List in 1983. In 1988, after completing a study to evaluate alternate water supplies, EPA selected a plan that called for extending the existing Catskill water district pipeline to the affected and potentially affected areas. EPA finished construction of the water pipeline in 1992. Since that time, there has been ongoing environmental monitoring at the site.



EPA selected a cleanup plan for the overall site in 1990. The elements of the plan included decontaminating the former manufacturing building, excavating and thermally treating the contaminated soil, and extracting and treating the contaminated groundwater.

EPA finished decontaminating the building in 1992, the soil cleanup in 1996, and constructing the groundwater extraction and treatment system in 1998. EPA operated the groundwater management system for 10 years before New York State assumed responsibility for its long-term operation and maintenance in 2008.



**What is a Five-Year Review?** The purpose of five-year reviews is to ensure that implemented cleanup plans at Superfund sites function as intended and continue to protect people's health and the environment.

A five-year review is underway. A summary of cleanup activities completed at the site, to date, and an evaluation of the protectiveness of the implemented cleanup plan will be included in the five-year review report that is anticipated to be completed in January 2024.

## EPA Contact Information

**Claudia Shuman**  
Remedial Project Manager  
(212) 637-4279  
[shuman.claudia@epa.gov](mailto:shuman.claudia@epa.gov)

**Larisa Romanowski**  
Community Involvement Coordinator  
(518) 407-0400, ext. 2  
[romanowski.larisa@epa.gov](mailto:romanowski.larisa@epa.gov)



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For general information or questions about EPA's Superfund program, please contact the EPA Regional Public Liaison: James Haklar, [haklar.james@epa.gov](mailto:haklar.james@epa.gov) or (732) 906-6817 or toll free at (888) 283-7626.