



EPA Proposes Interim Cleanup for Residential Soil in a Portion of the Site

March 2026

Federated Metals Corp. Whiting Superfund Site
Hammond and Whiting, Indiana

You are invited!

U.S. EPA invites you to discuss the proposed interim cleanup plan for the Federated Metals Superfund site.

Date: Thursday, March 26, 2026

Time: 6:00-7:45 p.m.

Location: Whiting High School Auditorium, 1751 Oliver St, Whiting

After a brief presentation, EPA will hold a formal public hearing to accept comments on the proposed cleanup plan.

For more information

If you have questions or comments, please contact:

Adrian Palomeque

U.S. EPA Community Involvement Coordinator
440-250-1715
Palomeque.Adrian@epa.gov

Leslie Patterson

U.S. EPA Remedial Project Manager
312-886-4904
Patterson.Leslie@epa.gov

You may also call EPA toll-free:
800-621-8431, weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Website

www.epa.gov/superfund/federated-metals



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, working with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, has proposed a plan to clean up soil on approximately 160 residential properties within a portion of the site known as Operable Unit 1 of the Federated Metals Corp. Whiting Superfund Site in Hammond and Whiting, Indiana. The site includes the approximately 36-acre area of the former Federated Metals smelting facility and the surrounding neighborhoods where pollution from former smelting operations has been detected.

Public Comment Period for Federated Metals

EPA will accept comments on the proposed cleanup plan from March 16 to April 15, 2026. This fact sheet provides background information, describes cleanup options, and explains EPA's recommendations. EPA may modify the plan or select another solution based on new information or public comments, so your opinion is important. There are several ways to offer comments:

- Complete and mail the enclosed comment form.
- Attend the public meeting and submit an oral or written statement.
- Go to: www.epa.gov/superfund/federated-metals and click on the "Public Comment Form."
- Submit a written comment via email to Palomeque.Adrian@epa.gov.

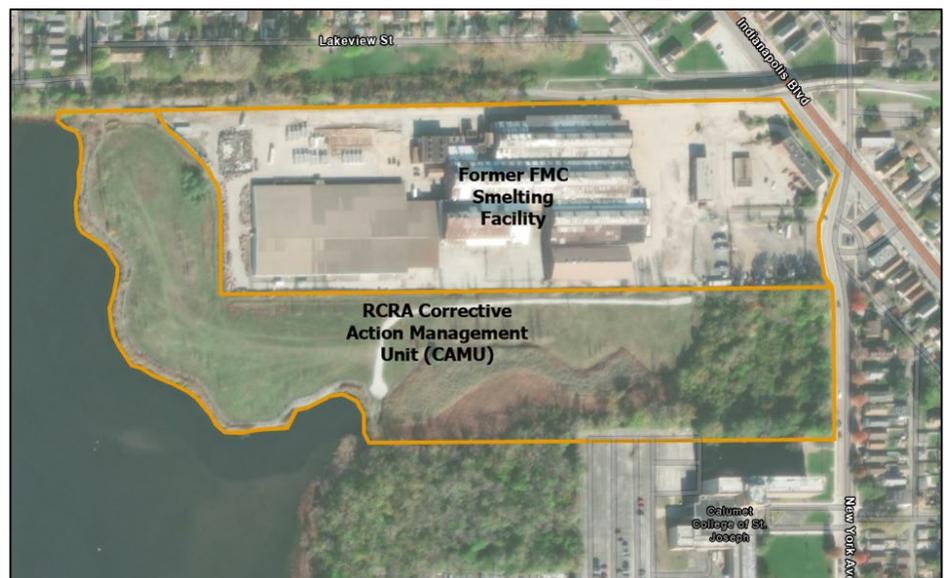


IMAGE 1: THE FORMER FEDERATED METALS FACILITY LAYOUT.

About the Federated Metals Site

The Federated Metals Superfund site includes the former location of the smelter on approximately 17 acres at 2230 Indianapolis Blvd. on the border of Whiting and Hammond, Indiana (Image 1). Adjacent to it is a 19-acre disposal area where EPA is managing facility waste under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (Image 1). The site also comprises residential areas, including single-family and multi-family homes, and other areas where sensitive populations may be exposed, located primarily north and east of the facility.

From 1937 to 1983, Federated Metals smelted, refined, recovered and recycled copper, zinc and lead at their facility along the shore of George Lake. Such smelting facilities historically emitted lead and other heavy metals from stacks, large industrial air filtration systems (known as baghouses), and waste piles. In 1985, Federated Metals sold 17 acres of the smelter manufacturing facilities to HBR Partnership. Subsequently, various metals fabricating and reclaiming businesses have operated at the former facility.

From 2001 to 2006, Federated Metals and its parent company, ASARCO, conducted a cleanup at the site; however, before that cleanup was completed, ASARCO declared bankruptcy. In 2009, \$1.2 million was awarded to a federal trustee to complete the site cleanup. While some cleanup work is complete, the work is still ongoing, and no funds remain to investigate potential releases of contaminants to the surrounding neighborhoods. Consequently, EPA's Superfund program initiated an investigation and in September of 2023 the site was added to the Superfund National Priorities List.

EPA breaks large, complex cleanup sites like the Federated Metals site into small, manageable parts called Operable Units. To organize and facilitate cleanup at this site, EPA designated residential properties as "OU1." Besides single- and multi-family homes, OU1 also includes places in neighborhoods where young children may be exposed to contamination from the site, including vacant lots, schools, daycare centers, community centers, playgrounds, parks, recreational areas and greenways. This early interim cleanup only addresses exposure to lead in soil in a portion of OU1.

EPA will investigate other ways that residents could be exposed to lead pollution, including the possibility of vapor intrusion or drinking groundwater, and will address further cleanup needs on all OU1 properties in future proposed cleanup plans. All other site areas (industrial and commercial properties, George Lake, etc.) are designated as "OU2."

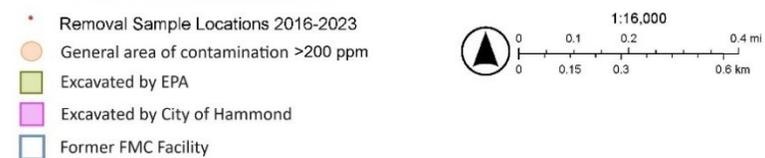
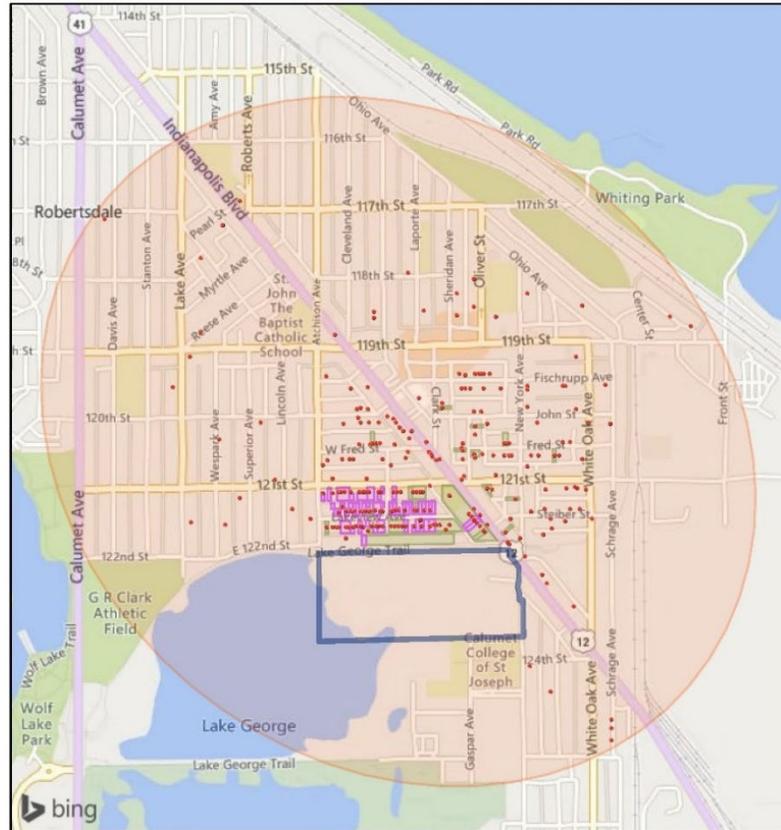


IMAGE 2: RESIDENTIAL SAMPLE LOCATIONS, EXCAVATED AREAS, AND GENERAL AREA OF OBSERVED LEAD CONTAMINATION ABOVE 200 PARTS PER MILLION.

Why is Cleanup Needed?

Lead pollution from past operations at the Federated Metals facility has polluted site soil. During EPA's site investigation from 2016 to 2023, we collected composite soil samples at 240 residential and non-residential properties. Of the 240 properties, approximately 215 parcels had lead concentrations exceeding the regulatory limit of 200 parts per million, and of those, approximately 160 residential properties have not been cleaned by either EPA or the

City of Hammond (Image 2). Residents can be exposed to lead contamination in soil by accidentally swallowing small amounts, breathing in dust, or getting it on their skin. According to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, the public is generally exposed to only the top few inches of soil. Lead is the only contaminant of concern for this interim cleanup action for residential properties in portions of OU1.

EPA's Updated Lead Cleanup Level

EPA has updated the target children's blood lead level, or BLL, to 5 micrograms per deciliter used to develop preliminary remediation goals for lead (see the October 2025 Lead Directive, accessed at <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/residential-soil-lead-directive-cercla-sites-and-rcra-hazardous-waste-cleanup-facilities>). To achieve the target BLL, the EPA is proposing a cleanup level of 200 ppm.

For more information about lead and its related health risks, visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/TSP/substances/ToxSubstance.aspx?toxid=22>.

Information Repositories

EPA maintains a record of site-related information and reference materials for the Federated Metals site. The public can read this information online at www.epa.gov/superfund/federated-metals under "Site Documents & Data." Electronic site documents can also be accessed at the information repository below:

Whiting Public Library
1735 Oliver St.
Whiting, IN

EPA's Evaluation Criteria

EPA's evaluation criteria guide EPA as it weighs different cleanup alternatives. These criteria are categorized as Threshold, Balancing and Modifying Criteria. **Threshold Criteria** determine if a cleanup alternative protects human and environmental health while complying with all applicable or relevant and appropriate requirements—these are the federal and

state regulations that EPA must follow during a cleanup. In cases where federal and state regulations are slightly different, EPA will follow the stricter regulations. **Balancing Criteria** are used to identify trade-offs between cleanup alternatives. **Modifying Criteria** are based on public comments and can prompt modifications to the recommended cleanup alternative (Image 3). EPA will evaluate state acceptance and community acceptance after the comment period and public meeting.

Cleanup Alternatives

EPA considered three different options for the interim cleanup within portions of OU1 of the Federated Metals site. EPA evaluated each option in detail against criteria established by federal law. EPA's recommended alternative provides the best balance of the evaluation criteria among all the alternatives. A recommended alternative would be protective of human health and the environment, meet all federal and state regulations, meet cleanup objectives, be cost-effective and be effective in the long term.

Cleanup Alternative 1: No Further Action

EPA is required to include a no-action alternative as a basis for comparison with other cleanup options. Under the no action alternative, EPA would take no additional action. No cost is associated with this alternative. Potential health risks would not be addressed.

Cost: \$0

Cleanup Alternative 2: Excavation of soil exceeding 200 ppm lead to a maximum 6-inch depth; a minimum of 12 inches of clean soil cover; restoration; institutional controls

Cleanup Alternative 2 includes soil excavation to a maximum depth of 6 inches and off-site disposal of soil exceeding 200 ppm lead at a Subtitle D landfill. A visual barrier, such as orange construction fencing or landscape fabric, would be placed if contaminated soil exists below the base of excavation. The excavated area would be backfilled and covered with clean topsoil to achieve a minimum 12-inch depth of clean soil. The property would be restored to its existing condition as close as possible. Applicable institutional controls, like deed notices or a registry of properties with contamination at depth, would be

implemented on those properties that do not meet the 200 ppm cleanup level below the base of excavation. EPA would perform five-year reviews of the remedy.

Estimated cost: **\$7,900,000**

Cleanup Alternative 3: Excavation of soil exceeding 200 ppm lead to 12 inches; backfill and restoration; institutional controls (EPA's Recommended Alternative): This alternative would be completed with the same activities as Cleanup Alternative 2, with

the exception that we would excavate to a maximum depth of 12 inches instead of 6 inches.

Alternative 3 would provide the greatest protection by removing lead-contaminated soil to a maximum depth of 12 inches from residential properties in a portion of OU1. The cost of Alternative 3 is higher than the cost of Alternative 2, but the greater long-term protection and implementability it provides justifies the additional cost.

Estimated cost: **\$9,500,000**

Evaluation Criteria Descriptions

IMAGE 3: LIST WITH DESCRIPTIONS OF EPA'S EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR WEIGHING CLEANUP ALTERNATIVES.

- 

1. Overall protection of human health and the environment.

 - Is it protective?
 - How are risks eliminated, reduced, or controlled?
- 

2. Compliance with ARARs.

 - Does it meet environmental laws or provide grounds for a waiver?
- 

3. Long-term effectiveness and permanence.

 - Does it provide reliable protection over time?
- 

4. Reduction of toxicity, mobility, or volume through treatment.

 - Does it use a treatment technology?
 - This is preferred, if possible.
- 

5. Short-term effectiveness.

 - Will the remedy be implemented fast enough to address short-term risks, and will there be adverse effects (human health or environmental) during construction/ implementation?
- 

6. Implementability.

 - How difficult will it be to implement (e.g. availability of materials or coordination of Federal, State, and local agencies)?
- 

7. Cost effectiveness.

 - What are the estimated capital and operation and maintenance costs in comparison to other, equally-protective alternatives?
- 

8. State acceptance.

 - Does the State agree with, oppose, or have no comment on it?
- 

9. Community acceptance.

 - Does the community support, have reservations about, or oppose it?

Threshold Criteria

must be met for an alternative to be eligible.

Balancing Criteria

determines relative strengths and weaknesses among the criteria that meet threshold.

Modifying Criteria

implemented once all public comments are evaluated. They may prompt modifications to the preferred alternative to achieve the end result of a preferred alternative for cleanup in which EPA and the community can be confident.

Next Steps

Before EPA makes a final decision, the agency will consult with IDEM and review public comments. EPA will hold a 30-day public comment period from March 16 to April 15, 2026.

EPA encourages you to review and comment on the proposed cleanup plan. More details on the cleanup alternatives are available in the Proposed Plan on file at the information repository or www.epa.gov/superfund/federated-metals.

EPA will respond to the comments in a document called a “Responsiveness Summary,” a part of the Record of Decision that describes the final cleanup plan. EPA will announce the selected cleanup plan in a local newspaper and will place a copy of the cleanup plan in the information repository and post it on EPA’s website.

Cleanup Alternatives Compared to the Nine Superfund Remedy Selection Criteria

Evaluation Criterion	Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3*
Overall Protection of Human Health and the Environment	○	●	●
Compliance with ARARs	○	●	●
Long-term Effectiveness and Permanence	○	⊙	●
Reduction of Toxicity, Mobility, or Volume through Treatment	○	○**	○**
Short-term Effectiveness	N/A***	⊙	⊙
Implementability	N/A***	⊙	●
Alternative Cost (\$ millions)	\$0	\$7.9M	\$9.5M
State Acceptance	IDEM has been involved in the review of alternatives and has indicated it concurs with EPA’s recommended Alternative 3.		
Community Acceptance	Will be evaluated after comment period.		

● Fully meets criterion ⊙ Partially meets criterion ○ Does not meet criterion

* EPA’s recommended alternative

** The large volume of relatively low-level lead-contaminated soil in OU1 does not lend itself to any cost-effective treatment. Instead, protectiveness is achieved by removal of contamination and disposal in a permitted disposal facility and maintaining a clean interval of soil from 0 to 12 inches below the surface.

*** N/A: Not applicable, since no remedy is being implemented in the No-Action Alternative

In-person Public Meeting/Hearing

EPA will host a public meeting/hearing on March 26, 2026, to explain the cleanup alternatives considered for the Federated Metals Site. The meeting will allow time for questions and for formal comments on interim proposed cleanup plan for residential properties within portions of OU1. A court reporter will record the meeting and all comments.

Date: Thursday, March 26, 2026

Time: 6 – 7:45 p.m.

Location: Whiting High School Auditorium, 1751 Oliver St, Whiting