



# EPA to Begin Cleanup of Former West Calumet Housing Complex

981880

**U.S. Smelter and Lead Refinery Superfund Site**  
East Chicago, Indiana

**April 2023**

## Public Meeting

**May 10, 2023, 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.**

### Old Carrie Gosch School Auditorium

EPA invites you to a public meeting to discuss the soil cleanup, safety measures, and future plans for the former West Calumet Housing Complex. See next page for more details.

## Contact information

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You may call EPA toll-free at 800-621-8431, 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., weekdays

## Information repository

Site documents can be viewed on the web page at [www.epa.gov/uss-lead-superfund-site](http://www.epa.gov/uss-lead-superfund-site) or at the East Chicago Public Library locations: 2401 E. Columbus Drive or 1008 W. Chicago Ave. in East Chicago



This summer, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will begin overseeing the cleanup of Zone 1 of the USS Lead Superfund site, which includes the former West Calumet Housing Complex, a portion of Goodman Park and a utility corridor (*see page 3 for a map of the cleanup areas*). Soil in these areas is contaminated with elevated levels of lead and arsenic.

The soil cleanup will be conducted by contractors working for Industrial Development Advantage of East Chicago (IDA), under close EPA supervision. IDA has informed EPA that it intends to clean up Zone 1 and install the necessary infrastructure to construct an approximately 850,000 square-foot warehouse and logistics center.

## Stockpiling of Clean Soil at Former Housing Complex

In May, trucks will begin transporting clean soil and stockpiling it inside the former West Calumet Housing Complex property. The stockpiles will be used as backfill material during the soil cleanup of Zone 1 of the USS Lead Superfund site later this year.

Nearby residents may notice increased truck traffic on 151st Street and Kennedy Avenue, Monday through Saturday during normal business hours. IDA is required to take measures to minimize dust. EPA will have air monitoring equipment on site to ensure dust does not leave the site and migrate towards nearby homes.

## Soil Cleanup Process

The soil cleanup of the former West Calumet Housing Complex is expected to begin in mid-June or July. These are the steps that the developer will follow to clean up the site:

- 1. Site Preparation:** Crews will establish staging areas for equipment, clean soil stockpile, and material; set up air monitoring system and conduct background monitoring; clear vegetation and remove debris; build access roads and install fencing.
- 2. Excavation of Contaminated Soil:** Excavation is required to remove contaminated soils that exceed the industrial/commercial cleanup levels. The levels are 800 parts per million (or ppm) for lead, and 26 ppm for arsenic. The excavation will extend to a maximum depth of 12 inches below ground surface. Over 100,000 tons of contaminated soil will be excavated and disposed off-site in a permitted landfill. An orange warning barrier will be placed to notify anyone digging about possible lead and arsenic contamination.
- 3. Backfill and Restore Excavated Areas:** Contractors will backfill the excavation areas with clean soils from offsite sources. All imported backfill must be sampled and analyzed. Excavated areas will be backfilled in accordance with the procedures provided in the EPA-approved Remedial Action Work Plan. Up to six inches of topsoil may be added in areas that will remain as greenspace.

## You are Invited to a Public Meeting

EPA will host an in-person public meeting on May 10, 2023. In this meeting, EPA and developer Industrial Development Advantage of East Chicago (IDA) will present the soil cleanup designs, explain how they plan on removing the contaminated soil, safety measures to keep neighboring residents safe, and construction of a logistics center at the site. There will be a questions-and-answers period after the presentation.

**Date: Wednesday, May 10, 2023**

**Time: 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.**

**Venue: Old Carrie Gosch School, Auditorium  
455 E. 148th St., East Chicago**

If you wish to request special accommodations to attend this meeting, please contact Charles Rodriguez at 312-886-7472 or [rodriguez.charles@epa.gov](mailto:rodriguez.charles@epa.gov).

### Soil Cleanup Process (continued)

**4. Construction of Logistics Center.** Once the cleanup is completed, IDA will begin with construction of the logistic center. As much as 5 feet of additional clean soil will be brought onto the site to raise the elevation of the site prior to constructing the logistic center. If any work is necessary to be performed below the excavated area, it must be performed in accordance with the EPA approved Soils Management Plan. The construction is expected to begin in 2024.

### How long will the cleanup work take?

EPA estimates that cleanup work will begin in mid-June or July and last through December 2023.

### Where will the excavated soil go?

All contaminated soil excavated will be shipped off to a disposal facility that is approved to receive and store hazardous materials. The facility selected is Republic Services – Newton County Landfill in Brook, Indiana.

### Safety Measures: Dust Control

The contractors performing the work are required to take steps to ensure there are no dust emissions during excavation and backfill of contaminated areas. They are also required to make sure there is no dust or soil tracked by the trucks used to transport contaminated materials or soils.

Some forms of dust prevention and suppression may include sprinkling water on soil to keep it damp and certain chemical treatments.

To avoid tracking dust or soil during transportation, contractors will cover the soil in the truck beds to

avoid creating dust, and will stop at wash racks before exiting the site onto public roads.



1: Example of water tanker wetting soil to prevent airborne dust.

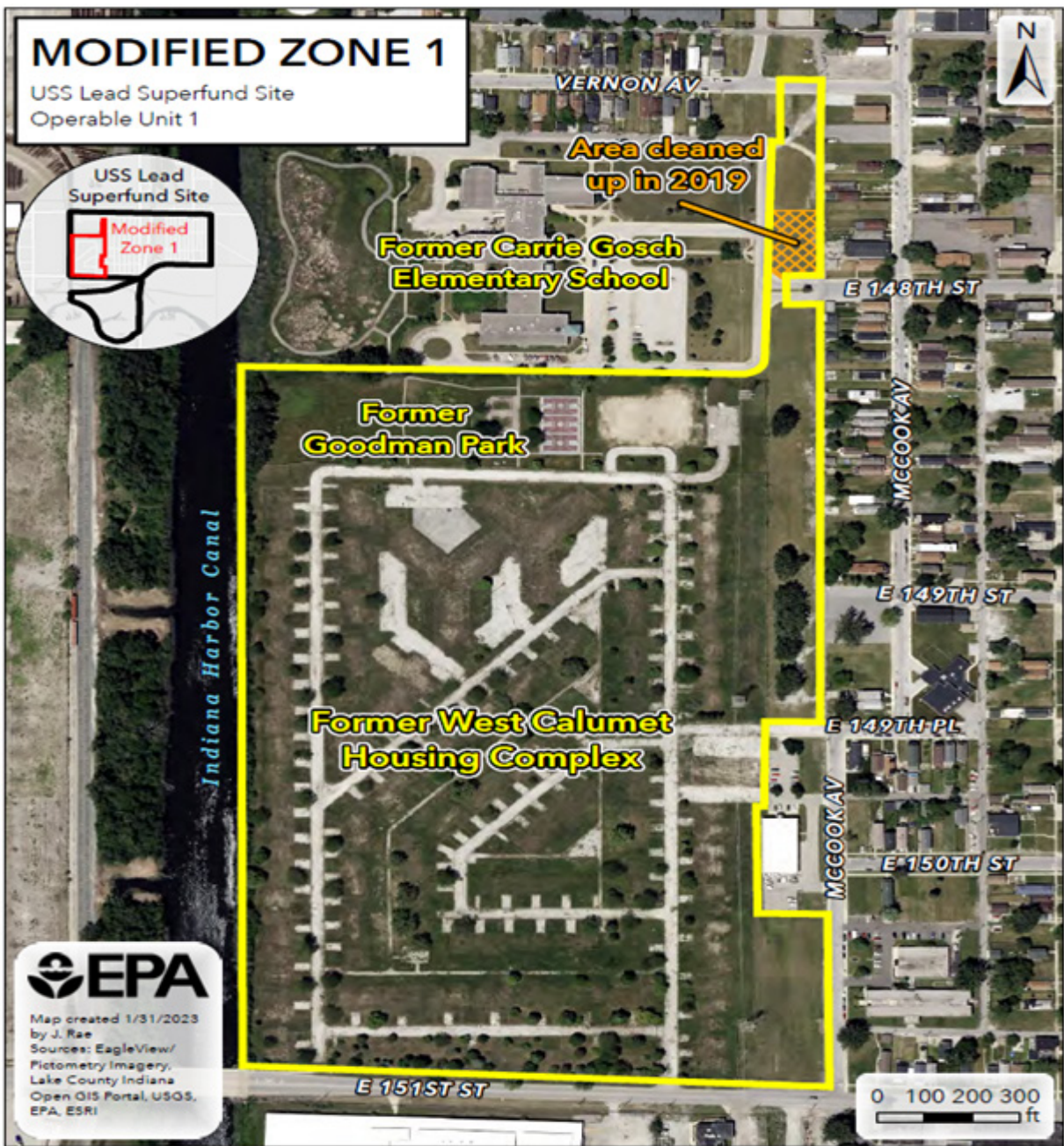
### Safety Measures: Air Monitoring

The contractor, under close EPA oversight, will establish an air monitoring network to ensure dust from the excavation and backfill work does not migrate towards nearby residences.

The air monitoring network will consist of fixed locations around the site perimeter, as well as portable air monitors that will be located right next to active work areas. Air monitoring also ensures that site workers are not exposed to dust resulting from cleanup operations.



2: EPA will deploy an air monitoring network featuring equipment similar to the pictured.



3: Map of cleanup areas, including the former West Calumet Housing Complex and Goodman Park.



4: Example of what the logistics center could look like after construction is finalized. Source: IDA.

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