



Superfund  
Redevelopment  
Initiative

# SITE REDEVELOPMENT PROFILE

Johns-Manville Corp. Superfund Site

Waukegan, Illinois



Cleanup in progress at the site. (Source: EPA)

**Site Location:** Greenwood Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois 60085

**Size:** 350 acres

**Existing Site Infrastructure:** All major types of infrastructure are located on site. The Union Pacific rail corridor is located immediately west of the site.

**Current Site Uses:** The site serves as a habitat area for migratory birds.

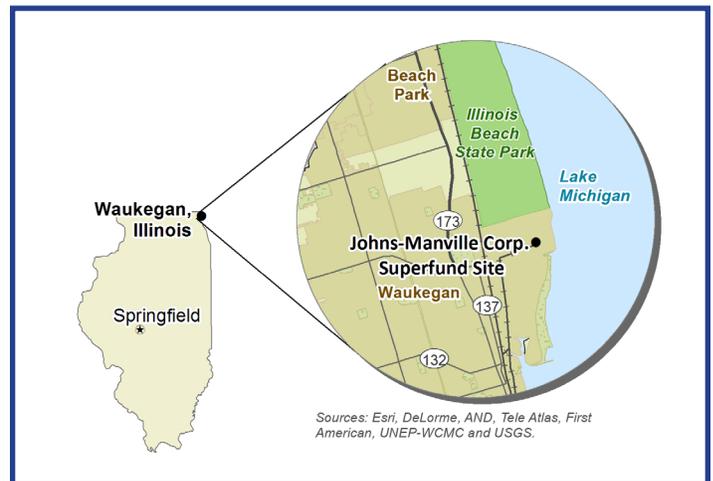
**Use Restrictions:** Remedy disturbance, groundwater use, residential uses, and other land uses incompatible with the remedy are prohibited.

**Surrounding Population:** within 0.5 miles, 12 people; within 2.5 miles, 33,100 people; within 4 miles, 94,501 people

This former manufacturing facility, landfill and asbestos disposal area is now home to a family of piping plovers – rare birds protected by the Endangered Species Act. Coordination among EPA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and Johns-Manville, the site’s potentially responsible party, has resulted in the site’s cleanup and ecological reuse.

From the 1920s until 1998, an asbestos manufacturing facility and landfill operated at the 350-acre area. Disposal of about 3 million cubic yards of products and wastewater sludge on site resulted in air, groundwater and surface water contamination. Contaminants of concern included asbestos, lead, chromium and xylene. Cleanup activities included construction of a vegetated soil cover and installation of barriers, paving, fencing and signage. Soil cover maintenance, groundwater monitoring and cleanup of contaminated off-site areas are ongoing.

The piping plovers and their seven hatchlings have made the site their home since May 2016. Adult piping plovers are about seven inches long, weigh two ounces and prefer to nest on pebbly beaches. The site is located on



Location of the site in Waukegan, Illinois.

Waukegan’s Lake Michigan shoreline, next to the Illinois State Beach Preserve, making it an ideal place for the birds to nest. As of 2015, there were only 75 documented pairs of piping plovers in the Great Lakes Region. The Waukegan Harbor Community Advisory Group is eager to return more of the site to reuse as an ecological preserve and migratory bird habitat area. The city of Waukegan

## SITE HISTORY AND REDEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

**1920s - 1998** Asbestos manufacturing facility and landfill operates at the site.

**September 1983** EPA places the site on the Superfund program's National Priorities List.

**June 1987** EPA selects a remedy for the site's waste disposal area.

**1991** Site owner completes initial cleanup; additional site cleanup is ongoing.

**December 2004** Land use restrictions prohibit remedy disturbance and prevent exposures to site contamination.

**May 2016** Piping plovers and their seven hatchlings make the site their home.

*"We've been working with the state and other groups, and they've been a tremendous help with rehabilitation of the site. We've given them access on site to conduct sightings of piping plovers ... people are all working together."*

– Scott Myers, Johns-Manville Director of Environmental Programs

made open space and ecological restoration a key goal in the city's 2003 Downtown and Lakefront Master Plan.

Looking forward, EPA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Johns-Manville are working together to ensure that the family of piping plovers can continue to thrive. Johns-Manville protects the birds during cleanup activities, installing fences and barriers to prevent them from entering work areas, and posts notices reminding workers of the birds' presence. Staff from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and community volunteers closely monitor the birds' health and activities. Ongoing collaboration among project partners has resulted in the site's successful cleanup and made possible the area's reuse as a valued ecological resource.



Piping plover walking on a pebble beach on site. (Source: EPA)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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A piping plover on site. (Source: EPA)