



Superfund  
Redevelopment  
Initiative

# SITE REDEVELOPMENT PROFILE

Welsbach & General Gas Mantle  
(Camden Radiation) Superfund Site

Camden and Gloucester City, New Jersey



**Site Location:** Camden and Gloucester City, New Jersey 08030

**Size:** 200 acres

**Existing Site Infrastructure:** All major types of infrastructure are located on site.

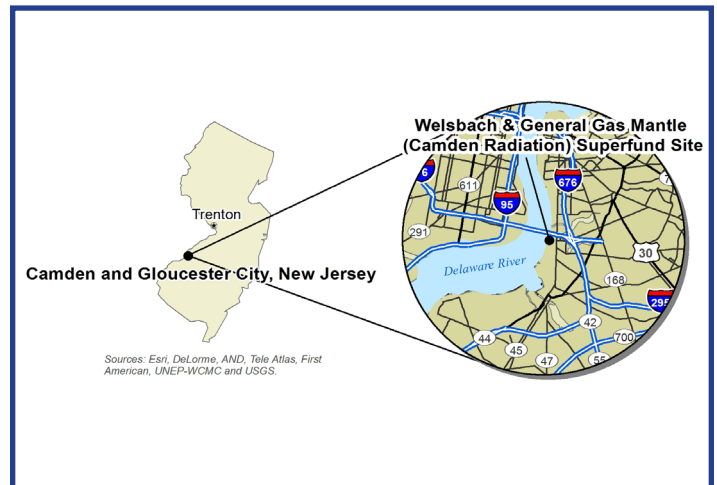
**Current Site Uses:** Commercial, industrial, recreational and public service uses are located on site.

**Use Restrictions:** Implementation of institutional controls is ongoing.

**Surrounding Population:** within 0.5 miles, 2,592 people; within 2.5 miles, 165,344 people; within 4 miles, 425,591 people.


The Welsbach & General Gas Mantle (Camden Radiation) Superfund site is a multi-property site in industrial and residential areas in Camden and Gloucester City, New Jersey. From the 1890s to the 1940s, the Welsbach Company (Welsbach) and the General Gas Mantle Company (GGM) made gas mantles on site. Welsbach extracted the radioactive element thorium from monazite ore to use in the gas mantle manufacturing process. As electric lighting replaced gas lighting, the two companies went out of business. Over time, all but one of the Welsbach buildings were demolished.

Site investigations identified radiological contamination at the two former gas mantle facilities and on about 200 properties in the areas around the facilities. In 1996, EPA placed the site on the Superfund program's National Priorities List (NPL). Cleanup began in 2000. Cleanup included excavation and removal of soil and waste materials with radiological contamination from the site and surrounding areas and disposal of the materials at a licensed off-site facility. Site investigations and cleanup are ongoing.



Location of the site in Camden and Gloucester City, New Jersey.

## SITE HISTORY AND REDEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

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- 1890s - 1940s** - Welsbach made gas mantles at its facility in Gloucester City.
  - 1912 - 1941** - GGM operated on site in Camden.
  - 1990s** - Various Welsbach buildings on site were demolished.
  - 1976** - A marine terminal and warehousing facility opened on site.
  - 1981** - EPA conducted an aerial radiological survey of the area.
  - 1991** - NJDEP conducted radiological investigations.
  - 1996** - EPA placed the site on the NPL.
  - 1997** - The site's remedial investigation and feasibility study started.
  - 2010** - The Waterfront South Theatre opened on site.
  - 2011** - Rooftop solar array was put in place at the Gloucester Marine Terminal.
  - 2017** - The Gloucester City Middle School opened on site.
  - 2018** - Cleanup and reuse planning efforts are ongoing.

Careful planning by EPA and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) enabled site businesses to remain open during cleanup. Close coordination between the agencies and the communities of Camden and Gloucester City also enabled reuse planning efforts to move forward. Today, land uses on site include commercial, industrial, recreational and public service uses. EPA and NJDEP continue to coordinate with site owners during ongoing investigations and cleanup. The Gloucester Marine Terminal and the Waterfront South Theatre highlight how continued uses and reuses at the site provide a range of community benefits.

In 1976, Holt Hauling and Warehousing Systems purchased the former Welsbach property in Gloucester City and converted it into a marine terminal and warehousing facility. Today, GMT Realty owns the 100-acre cargo facility, now called the Gloucester Marine Terminal. The facility includes 25 buildings. Terminal operations include import and export of specialized cargo such as perishable products, steel products, forest products and other project cargo and containers. At more than 20 million cubic feet, it has the largest refrigeration capacity of any terminal in the United States. Products received at the terminal travel across the United States and to Canada by truck or train.

More than 27,000 photovoltaic rooftop solar panels cover 1.1 million square feet on the roof of the terminal's refrigerated warehouse; it is the largest rooftop solar array in North America. Riverside Renewable Energy completed the installation in 2011. The array can produce up to 9 megawatts of electricity, enough to meet 50 percent of the terminal's power needs. The electricity is channeled into a main substation. Any leftover electricity is sold to the local power grid through a net metering agreement with the Public Service Electric and Gas Company. The array eliminates 16 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions annually, equivalent to removing 1,200 cars from the road.

In 2010, the Waterfront South Theatre opened on site. Heart of Camden, a nonprofit focused on community revitalization, owned a small vacant property in South Camden. After its cleanup, the organization turned it over to the South Camden Theatre Company. For more than three years, the theatre company staged productions in the basement of Sacred Heart Church, located across the street from the property. The theatre company's vision was to create a space for theatre, music and art in the center of the Waterfront



Entrance to the Gloucester Marine Terminal on site. (Source: EPA)

South Arts District. The organization broke ground on the 96-seat Waterfront South Theatre in April 2008. Its first season in the new theatre began in September 2010. More than 450 people attended the opening three-week run of shows. The facility also hosts a weekly movie night for kids and school plays.

Cleanup and reuse planning at the site allowed existing site businesses to keep operating during cleanup, while also creating opportunities for new development on site. In 2015, groundbreaking began on the construction of Gloucester City Middle School, which was opened in 2017. Site cleanup also included the restoration of local recreation facilities. Restoration of the William Flynn Veterans Complex included rebuilding three baseball fields, a football practice field and parking area. Restoration of the Nicholson

Road Sports Complex included restoring three softball fields, a little league baseball field, bathroom facilities and a concession stand. The community celebrated the reopening of the William Flynn Veterans Complex and the Nicholson Road Complex in 2011 and 2014, respectively. Many additional uses take place on areas of the site, including auto repair companies, a construction company and a pallet manufacturing company. Ongoing collaborative efforts by EPA, NJDEP and the communities of Camden and Gloucester City continue to make these uses possible, and will allow for the use of other site areas in the future.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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