

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

Proposed NPL Site

March 2022

**HIGHWAY 3 PCE | Le Mars, Iowa
Plymouth County**** Site Location:**

The Highway 3 PCE site encompasses approximately 6.5 acres of land and is located off Route 75 East in Le Mars, Plymouth County, Iowa.

 Site History:

Historic operations from Ideal Cleaners, a former dry cleaner business located in Le Mars, Iowa, has released tetrachloroethene (PCE) and its breakdown product, trichlorethylene (TCE), into the soil and groundwater. As a result, the overlying commercial and residential properties have contaminated indoor air due to vapor intrusion. Ideal Cleaners ceased operations in August 2020 and the property was sold. The current owners operate the building as a storefront and a drop-off/pick-up location for dry cleaning that is conducted at a different location.

 Site Contamination/Contaminants:

PCE and TCE is exceeding benchmark levels in indoor air and sub-slab soil gas in residential and commercial properties.

 Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:

High levels of PCE and TCE vapor are contaminating indoor air in commercial and residential properties in the town of Le Mars. Many of the commercial properties have overlying apartment units, further compounding the potential for exposure to contaminated indoor vapors. There are 29 commercial properties with confirmed vapor intrusion impacting more than 100 workers.

 Response Activities (to date):

The EPA Superfund removal program installed 20 vapor mitigation systems at commercial/residential buildings to address the contaminated indoor air. The current owner of 18 Plymouth Street SE (the former Ideal Cleaners) was cooperative with the EPA in regard to planning and conducting a time-critical removal action to address the source area of PCE-contaminated soil. The removal action involved demolition of a portion of the site building and excavation and proper disposal of approximately 690 tons of PCE-contaminated soil. Excavation activities were completed in May 2021.

 Need for NPL Listing:

Long-term remedial action is needed to permanently clean up the contaminated groundwater which is causing the vapor intrusion. Other federal and state cleanup programs were evaluated, but are not viable at this time. The EPA received a letter of support for placing the site on the NPL from the state.

[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination. See 56 FR 5600, February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. [ATSDR ToxFAQs](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) can be found on the Internet at <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp> or by telephone at 1-800-CDC-INFO or 1-800-232-4636.