

# FACT SHEET

## Brownfield Cleanup Program

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**Site Name:** ExxonMobil Oil Former Buffalo Terminal OU-2

**DEC Site #:** C915201

**Address:** 625 Elk Street, Buffalo, NY

Have questions?  
See  
"Who to Contact"  
Below

### Remedy Proposed for Brownfield Site Contamination; Public Comment Period Announced

The public is invited to comment on a proposed remedy being reviewed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to address contamination related to ExxonMobil Oil Former Buffalo Terminal Operable Unit 2 (OU-2) ("site") located at 625 Elk Street in Buffalo, Erie County, NY. Please see the map for the site location. Documents related to the cleanup of this site can be found at the locations identified below under "Where to Find Information."

The cleanup activities will be performed and funded by ExxonMobil Environmental Services Company (applicant) with oversight provided by NYSDEC. When NYSDEC is satisfied that cleanup requirements have been achieved, the applicant may be eligible for tax credits to offset the costs of performing cleanup activities and for redevelopment of the site.

It should be noted that NYSDEC has recently received a request from ExxonMobil Environmental Services Company to amend the existing site wide Brownfield Cleanup Program agreement to include (5) separate agreements encompassing the entire upland area of the site (potentially contaminated near shore Buffalo river sediments will be addressed under order with the NYSDEC). The five individual agreements will expedite remediation on portions of the site to help facilitate planned redevelopment by Elk Street Commerce Park, LLC. This administrative effort will not affect the overall remediation strategy at the site.

Based on the findings of the investigation, NYSDEC, in consultation with the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has determined that the site poses a significant threat due to potential releases of contaminants and petroleum product to the Buffalo River, hazardous tetraethyl lead detected in river sediments and the presence of on-site hazardous lead fill.

Additional site details, including environmental and health assessment summaries, are available on NYSDEC's website at:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/cfmx/extapps/derexternal/haz/details.cfm?pageid=3&progno=C915201>

#### How to Comment

NYSDEC is accepting written comments about the proposed cleanup plan for 45 days, from **May 3, 2017 through June 16, 2017**. The draft Remedial Investigation Alternatives Analysis Report

(RIAAR) containing the proposed site remedy is available for public review at the locations identified below under "Where to Find Information." Please submit comments to the NYSDEC project manager listed under Project Related Questions in the "Who to Contact" area below.

The OU-2 area comprises approximately 31 acres out of the 90.4 acre Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) site.

The proposed remedy for OU-2 consists of:

1. In place treatment, utilizing a soil amendment such as lime kiln dust or portland cement, to stabilize approximately 204,600 cubic yards of soil/fill grossly contaminated with petroleum products. Treatment of these soils will remove nuisance characteristics including slight sheening, staining and odors.
2. In place stabilization of approximately 11,600 cubic yards of lead impacted soils, rendering the soils non-hazardous.
3. Excavation and off-site disposal of semi-volatile organic compound (SVOC) impacted soils above commercial criteria from the Babcock Street Property Area (BSPA) (approximately 2,600 cubic yards) and the Buckeye Terminal property (approximately 750 cubic yards). The excavations will be backfilled with acceptable imported fill.
4. Removing and processing concrete foundations and debris (15,000 cubic yards).
5. Removal and disposal of process piping (1,500 linear feet).
6. Installation of 1-foot of clean soil over the stabilized/treated soils (31 acres).
7. Some petroleum impacted soils below paved areas or under buildings may be left in place, provided that the pavement is competent. A Site Management Plan will be developed with direction of how to handle, treat or dispose of the impacted soils if they are uncovered during future site development.
8. Filing of an Environmental Easement on the property that restricts site use to commercial use and requires compliance with the Site Management Plan.
9. Preparation and implementation of a Site Management Plan that will ensure the remedy remains protective.

Remedies for other portions of the site are being developed and will be released in the future.

### **Summary of the Investigation**

During the remedial investigations, soil, groundwater, soil vapor and indoor air samples were evaluated. The primary sources of contamination in OU-2 are the historical petroleum refining, storage and distribution operations that have taken place across the majority of the site since the late 1800s. The prolonged use of OU-2 for these operations resulted in widespread occurrence of petroleum product, metal, volatile organic compound (VOC) and SVOC contamination. In addition, the site is located in an area with an industrial history of metal production, chemical manufacturing, paint and varnish manufacturing and waste disposal. These background influences also have likely contributed to the concentrations of metals and SVOCs.

The greatest petroleum-related impacts were observed in samples collected during former pipe removal activities, in the vicinity of former and/or current tanks, and some of the former Waste Handling Areas (WHAs). In general, petroleum impacts in OU2 are limited to the top 5 feet of soil/fill due to the presence of native clay and/or the groundwater table. The highest metals

concentrations (including hazardous lead soil/fill) are present in the eastern portion of OU2 where previous land uses included white leaded paint and varnish manufacturing.

### **Next Steps**

NYSDEC will consider public comments received on the proposed remedy presented in the draft RIAAR and ultimately issue a final Decision Document. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) must also concur with the remedy. The final RIAAR (with revisions if necessary) and the Decision Document will be made available to the public. The applicants may then design and perform the cleanup action to address the site contamination, with oversight by NYSDEC and NYSDOH.

NYSDEC will keep the public informed throughout the investigation and cleanup of the site.

### **Background**

**Operable Units:** The 90.4 acre BCP site has been segregated into (5) operable units (OU) based on past use and nature of contamination. An operable unit represents a portion of a remedial program for a site that for technical or administrative reasons can be addressed separately to investigate, eliminate or mitigate a release, threat of release or exposure pathway resulting from the site contamination. OU-2 comprises a 30 acre area that is located south of Elk street and formerly housed refining and petroleum storage facilities. An interim remedial measure previously completed in OU-2 included the removal of approximately 22 miles of below ground process piping.

**Location:** OU-2/BCP site are located on Elk Street in the City of Buffalo, Erie County. The BCP site is bisected by Babcock Street running north-south and Prenatt Street, which is a paper street, running east-west. The BCP site and OU-2 are bordered on the north by a mixture of commercial and residential properties, on the east and west by commercial businesses and on the south by the Buffalo River.

**Site Features:** The BCP site and OU-2 area is relatively flat. Several occupied and vacant buildings exist on OU-2. The balance of the larger BCP site contains an active petroleum distribution facility with multiple large above ground petroleum storage tanks. An inactive northeasterly-trending railroad right-of-way separates the eastern tank yard area (OU-4) from the balance of the ExxonMobil former Buffalo Terminal site.

**Current Zoning and Land Use:** The majority of the site is currently zoned industrial. It is located in an urban area, generally surrounded by a mixture of industrial and commercial property. There are a few isolated residential parcels located immediately to the north. A large portion of the site is vacant. The largest active facility on-site is a petroleum distribution terminal. Several smaller commercial businesses operate on the western end of the site.

**Past Use of the Site:** Since the 1880s, the site has been used for petroleum refining and storage. Refining operations terminated in the 1980s. Former refinery, lube plant and terminal activities have impacted this site.

### **Site Geology and Hydrogeology:**

Three unconsolidated deposits exist throughout the majority of the site including a fill layer (cinders, ash, slag, sand, brick, concrete, etc.), underlain by an alluvial deposit layer consisting of silt, sands, gravel and clay and an alluvial deposit layer consisting of glacial lake laid clay which acts as a

confining layer. Groundwater is approximately 3 to 5+ feet below ground surface in OU-2 and up to 20 feet below ground surface in other areas of the site closer to the Buffalo River. Groundwater generally flows southwest toward the Buffalo River.

**Brownfield Cleanup Program:** New York's Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) encourages the voluntary cleanup of contaminated properties known as "brownfields" so that they can be reused and redeveloped. These uses include recreation, housing, business or other uses.

A brownfield site is any real property where a contaminant is present at levels exceeding the soil cleanup objectives or other health-based or environmental standards, criteria or guidance adopted by DEC that are applicable based on the reasonably anticipated use of the property, in accordance with applicable regulations.

For more information about the BCP, visit: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8450.html>

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Where to Find Information

Project documents are available at the following location(s) to help the public stay informed.

Valley Community Center  
93 Leddy Street  
Buffalo, New York 14210  
716-823-4707 or 716-823-8299

Selected project documents are also available on the NYSDEC website at:  
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37554.html> (Scroll down under Erie County)

### Who to Contact

Comments and questions are always welcome and should be directed as follows:

#### Project Related Questions

Eugene Melnyk, PE  
New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation  
270 Michigan Avenue  
Buffalo, New York 14203  
716-851-7220  
eugene.melnyk@dec.ny.gov  
{ Call for an appointment }

#### Site-Related Health Questions

Richard Jones  
New York State Department of Health  
Bureau of Environmental Exposure and  
Investigation  
Empire State Plaza, Corning Tower,  
Rm 1787, Albany NY 12237  
315-477-8148  
[bee@health.ny.gov](mailto:bee@health.ny.gov)

We encourage you to share this fact sheet with neighbors and tenants, and/or post this fact sheet in a prominent area of your building for others to see.

**Receive Site Fact Sheets by Email**

Have site information such as this fact sheet sent right to your email inbox.

NYSDEC invites you to sign up with one or more contaminated sites county email listservs available at the following web page: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html>. It's quick, it's free, and it will help keep you *better informed*.

As a listserv member, you will periodically receive site-related information/announcements for all contaminated sites in the county(ies) you select.

**Note:** Please disregard if you already have signed up and received this fact sheet electronically.



