



# FACT SHEET

## Cleanup Activities to Begin at Bengart and Memel Site

State Superfund Program

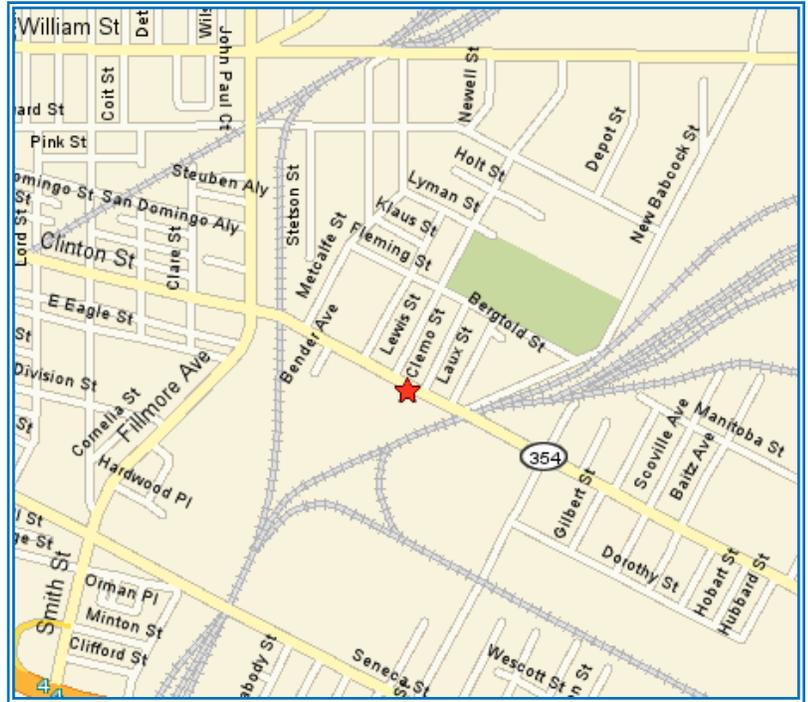
November 2009

Site No. 915115

### Introduction

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) is pleased to update you about environmental cleanup activities planned for the Bengart and Memel Site located at 1079 Clinton in the City of Buffalo. NYSDEC has determined that cleanup work is necessary to address environmental impacts that resulted from former metal recycling operations, including scrapping transformers and capacitors that contained polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). PCBs are large bulky molecules that are oily in nature and difficult to break down. They are the major contaminant of concern in the site's surface and subsurface soils.

To address this concern, a cleanup effort known as an Interim Remedial Measure (IRM) will begin in November 2009. An IRM is a cleanup action that can be conducted relatively quickly to address an obvious environmental problem in order to minimize environmental or health risks.



Cleanup work at the site will be performed under New York State's Superfund Program. The Superfund Program cleans up contaminated sites where consequential amounts of hazardous waste may exist. For more information on the Superfund program, visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8439.html>.



### What Will the Cleanup Work Involve?

The upcoming IRM cleanup work will address immediate environmental concerns involving PCB contamination at the site. The cleanup activities will include:

- Demolishing the remaining building, with asbestos abatement;
- Decommissioning the dilapidated groundwater collection and treatment system;
- Excavating and disposing impacted soil and fill; and
- Restoring the site by leveling the excavation, covering the area with gravel, and installing new fencing.

Details concerning the site are presented in the Site Investigation Report, as well as the IRM Work Plan, which are available for public review at the locations listed at the end of this fact sheet and on the NYSDEC website. During upcoming cleanup activities, health and safety plans and air monitoring plans will be implemented to protect workers and the community.

## **Next Steps**

After cleanup work has been completed, DEC will publish a report that will propose either no further action or additional measures to complete the cleanup of the site. The report, called an Interim Remedial Measure/Alternative Analysis Report, is expected to be released in mid 2010. Fact sheets similar to this one will be sent to notify you about important project milestones and to keep you updated throughout the project's progress.

In addition to improving environmental conditions, the cleanup work will help make future redevelopment of the site possible. Once all necessary environmental cleanup activities are completed, the property will be suitable for reuse.

## **Site Background**

Bengart and Memel's operations involved recovery of metal and metals alloys. Transformers and capacitors were accepted at the site, and PCB oil spills resulted in contaminated soils and shallow groundwater. Early in the 1980s, PCB impacted run-off reached the Buffalo Sewer Authority's combined sanitary sewer on Clinton Street. Under a NYSDEC order signed in 1982, the site owner/operator at that time conducted cleanup actions between 1984 and 1986 to address the contamination. These activities included:

- Participating in an Environmental Protection Agency pilot study project in which impacted soils were treated to reduce the concentration and toxicity of PCBs;
- Excavating and properly disposing impacted soils at a registered offsite disposal facility; and
- Installing an asphalt cap system and groundwater collection/treatment system to contain residual contaminants at the site.

Under the 1982 order, the owner/operator was required to operate and maintain these systems. However, they have not been properly maintained. The current owner abandoned the site and has not responded to NYSDEC's directives. In order to assess the need for continued operation and maintenance of these systems, NYSDEC conducted a limited site investigation in 2006. The investigation documented elevated concentrations of PCBs in surface and subsurface soil/fill materials that are above NYSDEC standards for soil and sediment. Water collected at various points also indicated PCB contamination of groundwater and surface water. There is the potential for contaminated runoff to migrate offsite. People might also come into contact with contaminated soil or inhale contaminated dust.

## **Who Should I Call If I Have Questions About the Site:**

### **Environmental Questions**

Mr. Eugene Melnyk, P.E., Project Manager  
NYSDEC  
270 Michigan Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14203  
(716) 851-7220

### **Health Questions**

Mr. Cameron O'Connor, Public Health Specialist  
NYS Department of Health  
584 Delaware Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14202  
(716) 847-4385

## **Locations to View Project Documents**

Project documents are available for public viewing at the following locations:

East Clinton St. Public Library  
1929 East Clinton Street  
Buffalo, NY 14206  
(716) 823-5626

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
270 Michigan Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14203  
(716) 851-7220(*Please call for an appointment.*)

Documents are also available in electronic format on DEC's Region 9 Environmental Remediation Project Information page. Go to <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37554.html> and look for the Bengart and Memel entry under the Erie County heading.