



# FACT SHEET

## Brownfield Cleanup Program

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**Site Name:** 500 Seneca Street Site  
**DEC Site #:** C915273 Operable Units 01, 01A, 01B \*  
**Address:** 500 Seneca Street; Buffalo, NY 14204  
**Website:** <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/102463.html>

Have questions?  
See  
"Who to Contact"  
Below

### Report Recommends Cleanup of Brownfield Site Contamination

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is reviewing the Remedial Investigation Report for the 500 Seneca Street Site ("site") located at 500 Seneca Street, Buffalo, Erie County. Please see the map for the site location. Documents related to the cleanup of this site can be found at the location(s) identified below under "Where to Find Information."

#### Remedial Investigation Report

DEC is reviewing the "Remedial Investigation Report" that was submitted by 500 Seneca Street, LLC ("applicant(s)"). The report describes the results of the site investigation and recommends development of a remedy to address the contamination that was found.

#### Highlights of the Remedial Investigation Report

##### *Summary of the Investigation for OU 01:*

Investigations have determined that elevated levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) as well as metals including arsenic, lead and mercury existed at the site.

Soils within a loading dock area were determined to contain VOCs including trichloroethylene (TCE) and perchloroethene (PCE) exceeding site cleanup goals.

SVOCs associated with former petroleum storage tanks were found in the western lot area. Metals including arsenic, lead and mercury were also found to exceed commercial cleanup goals.

Several miscellaneous items were found which require remediation including the cleaning of a basement that was flooded. An inactive blower motor sump within the basement was found to contain low level poly-cyclic biphenyls (PCBs). Also found were several hundred florescent light bulbs and ballasts along with several random pails and cans containing miscellaneous greases and chemicals requiring removal and disposal.

Groundwater is located from 6 to 10 feet below the ground surface. Groundwater contained residual VOCS and SVOCs. Groundwater is not of quantity or quality for potable uses.

Additionally, groundwater is prohibited from use without treatment or without notification to the Department. Public water service is provided to the site.

*Summary of the Investigation for OU 01A:*

Prior to the IRM surface soils located in a small, empty lot area in the western portion of the site which contained a maintenance garage, parking and a re-fueling area were impacted with semi-volatile volatile compounds (SVOCs). The SVOCs consisted mainly of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), a group of organic contaminants that form from the incomplete combustion of hydrocarbons, such as coal and gasoline.

Also found in the western lot area were volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that remained after a removal of two former USTs and approximately 45 tons of impacted soil addressed under DEC Spills Program (Spill No. 0751217). The petroleum related compounds including benzene, ethylbenzene, toluene and xylene all exceeded unrestricted SCOs. Sub-surface soils were also impacted with, semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) and metals.

*Summary of the Investigation for OU 01B:*

Prior to the IRM investigations had noted the presence of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including, trichloroethene (TCE) and tetrachloroethene (PCE.) These compounds existed in the soil and groundwater in a roughly 30 feet by 30 feet area within a loading dock area in the north-central portion of the existing building.

Post IRM excavation sampling affirmed the removal of the impacted soils was effective in addressing the recommendations set forth in the two Soil Vapor/Indoor Air matrices included in the DOH's "Final Guidance for Evaluating Soil Vapor Intrusion in State of New York" dated October 2006 to "identify sources and reduce exposures".

Post-IRM groundwater monitoring has shown the removal to be effective in removing the source area. Sampling results from all monitoring wells were below groundwater quality standards for VOCs.

The excavation was backfilled with approved backfill and concrete was re-poured over the excavation.

**Next Steps**

DEC will complete its review, make any necessary revisions and, if appropriate, approve the investigation report. The approved report will be made available to the public (see "Where to Find Information" below). The applicant(s) may then develop a cleanup plan, called a "Remedial Work Plan." This plan describes how contamination will be addressed, with DEC and DOH overseeing the work. DEC will present the draft cleanup plan to the public for its review and comment during a 45-day comment period.

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

#### Location:

The 500 Seneca Street Site is located in an urban, mixed-use, commercial and residential area. Located within the City of Buffalo the approximately 1.87 acre site encompasses an entire block bordered by Seneca Street to the South, Myrtle Street to the North, Hamburg Street to the East and Spring Street to the West.

#### Site Features:

The site is comprised of a 328,000 square foot multi-story building with a small open lot on the western site of the parcel. The building was constructed beginning in 1901 with various additions and expansions. An open-air courtyard exists in the eastern portion of the building.

#### Current Zoning and Land Use:

The site is currently vacant commercial property, and is zoned M-1, light industrial district. The building is listed in the National Registry of Historic Places. The future use of the site is intended for restricted residential and commercial. The nearest residential parcel is less than 500 feet to the north.

#### Past Use of the Site:

The site originally housed the F.N. Burt Company, which utilized the property for box manufacturing from original building construction in the early 1900's until 1959. Between approximately 1968 and 1980, Wolkind Bros, Inc., a clothing rental company, utilized the property. Between 1986 and 2004, the site was used for manufacturing, warehousing and shipping operations. The site has been largely vacant and underutilized since manufacturing operations ceased in 2004.

Two underground storage tanks were removed in December 2007 under spill number 0751217. In addition to the tanks approximately 45 tons of petroleum contaminated soil and 1,650 gallons of petroleum/water mixture was removed and disposed. Residual petroleum remained under a single story garage. The remaining impacts resulted in a closed-inactive status for the petroleum spill.

#### Site Geology and Hydrology:

The majority of the site is characterized by 6 inches of asphalt or concrete above 6 inches of gravel, with underlying fill soils comprised mostly of sand and brick from 4 to 4.5 feet below ground surface. Native soils are encountered about 4.5 feet below ground surface and generally consist of clayey silt with intermittent layers of silty sand and gravel. Bedrock consisting of Middle Devonian, Onondaga Shale was encountered about 13 feet below ground surface

Groundwater is encountered from 5 to 9 feet below ground surface. However when excavated to bedrock little infiltration was noted, indicative of a perched condition. The site is located approximately 0.8 miles northeast of the Buffalo River and local Site groundwater flows west-northwest with the upper horizon influenced by urban infrastructure.

Additional site details, including environmental and health assessment summaries, are available on DEC's website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/102463.html> and <http://www.dec.ny.gov/cfmx/extapps/derexternal/haz/details.cfm?pageid=3&progno=C915273>.

**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 may include recreation, housing, business or other uses.

A **brownfield** is any real property that is difficult to reuse or redevelop because of the presence or potential presence of contamination.

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 locations to help the public stay informed.

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library  
Attn: Ms. Mary Jean Jakubowski  
1 Lafayette Square  
Buffalo, NY 14203  
716-858-8900  
([jakubowskim@buffalolib.org](mailto:jakubowskim@buffalolib.org))

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
Attn: Maurice Moore  
270 Michigan Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14203  
716-851-7220

### **Who to Contact**

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

#### Project Related Questions

Maurice Moore  
Department of Environmental Conservation  
Division of Environmental Remediation  
270 Michigan Ave  
Buffalo, NY 14203  
716-851-7220  
[maurice.moore@dec.ny.gov](mailto:maurice.moore@dec.ny.gov)

#### Site-Related Health Questions

Bridget K. Boyd  
New York State Department of Health  
Empire State Plaza Corning Tower, Rm. 1787  
Albany, NY 12237  
518-402-7860  
[BEEI@health.ny.gov](mailto:BEEI@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. DEC 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.

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