

ELMIRA HIGH SCHOOL

Former Sperry Remington Property Cleanup

Brownfield Cleanup Program

777 South Main Street, Elmira, NY 14904

WHO TO CONTACT



Comments and questions are always welcome and can be submitted through the [Project Hotline](#)

Or to the project managers:

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FOR INFORMATION ON THE BROWNFIELD CLEANUP PROGRAM:

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/102390.html>

Introduction

The New York State Departments of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Health (DOH) continue to oversee the ongoing investigation and cleanup activities at the Elmira High School (EHS) property to ensure a comprehensive and careful cleanup that is protective of public health and the environment while keeping the Elmira community informed of our progress and actions. Our top priority is ensuring that students, faculty, staff, and visitors will not be exposed to the site-related contamination, which is below ground. Unisys Corporation, the corporate successor of the Remington Rand company, is committed under its Brownfield Cleanup Agreement with New York State to fully investigate and implement a comprehensive cleanup of the site and any impacted off-site areas consistent with Brownfield Cleanup Program requirements.

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide the community with an update regarding upcoming and recently completed investigation and cleanup activities at EHS (#c808022) and two adjacent projects, the Former Sperry Remington Site (#808043) and Former Scott Technologies Site (#808049).

COVID-19: Completing Essential Work Safely

Under New York State Executive Order 202.6, DEC deemed all remedial investigation and cleanup activities necessary to protect public health and the environment at EHS and surrounding sites, and, accordingly, considered these activities to be essential work during the COVID-19 response. All personnel associated with the remedial efforts at these sites will continue to comply with all State COVID-19 precautions, and with EHS COVID-19 procedures. DEC will employ alternative ways as needed to inform the public virtually and engage with all stakeholders throughout the project.

A site specific COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan was developed, approved by DEC and DOH, and is in place. This plan addresses best work practices to be implemented on the job sites to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Finally, this plan will be updated as additional information and guidance become available.

Interim Site Management Plan

Unisys developed and is implementing an Interim Site Management Plan (ISMP) for EHS. This ISMP monitors and maintains existing and newly constructed soil cover and other protective systems and procedures to reduce the risk of exposure to below-ground contamination until the comprehensive investigation and final site remedy is completed. The ISMP includes measures to monitor and maintain engineering controls, including cover system barriers (e.g., concrete floors, pavement, mulch beds, clean and vegetated soil) and sub-slab depressurization systems (SSDS) to prevent contaminated vapors from mixing with indoor air. If deficiencies are found during scheduled ISMP inspections, actions will be taken to quickly address these concerns. ISMP monitoring and inspections are conducted quarterly, with the most recent event being completed in September 2020.

Interim Remedial Measure (IRM) #4 Construction

Over the summer of 2020, Unisys completed IRM #4, adjacent to the north and west side of the locker rooms at EHS. An estimated 6,500 cubic yards (approximately 12,300 tons) of soil were excavated and

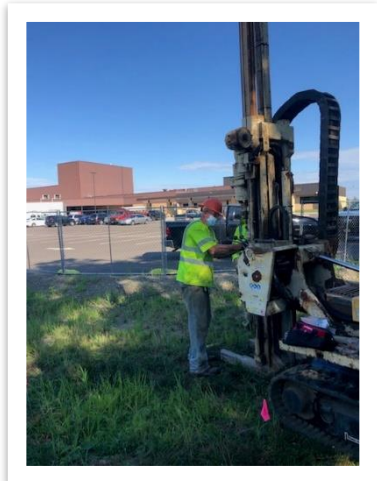


taken off-site for disposal at appropriate facilities or re-used as backfill where the soil met cleanup standards. Safety measures, such as fencing and signage, were in place to prohibit access to the site. During construction, EHS building foundations were monitored and protected from disturbance. Excavated material was transferred to a temporary material storage area (MSA) over a temporary haul road, prepared for disposal or tested for re-use, and then loaded into clean, covered trucks for disposal, exiting through the construction entrance to South Main Street.

IRM #4 Summer 2020

DEC and DOH require a Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP) to measure airborne particulate matter. Dust and airborne PCB concentrations were continuously monitored during construction activities in areas where PCBs in soil were known to be greater than 50 parts per million (ppm). Measures to control dust were implemented so that dust did not leave work areas. The backfilled excavation was capped with two feet of clean soil and the work area was restored with turf and sidewalks. The activities completed as part of IRM #4 will be summarized in a construction completion report.

Comprehensive Remedial Investigation



Soil sampling at EHS for the remedial investigation

Unisys has completed soil sampling across the majority of the EHS site to depths of 16 feet below ground, which is the approximate depth to groundwater. In August 2020, initial soil sampling was conducted to determine the extent of potentially impacted soil off-site, west of the northern athletic fields, and on-site soils at the location of the former grandstand at the football field. In addition, an assessment was completed of potential impacts from an on-site industrial storm sewer. Additional delineation of soil impacts is necessary in some areas to support future on-site cleanup plans. Plans for that soil sampling and a comprehensive site-wide groundwater investigation are being revised and fieldwork is scheduled to begin soon after DEC approval. Work is also planned to assess the attenuation, or shrinking, of the groundwater plumes extending east of the site toward the railroad tracks. Previous and extensive study of these plumes was completed and found no adverse risk to public health.

Coldbrook Creek Sampling

Unisys has identified the downstream extent of impacted sediments in Coldbrook Creek and is now investigating the extent of impacted soils along the creek banks and in the flood zone. An extensive sampling program along the creek banks and flood zone was completed in July and August 2020. Sampling within and along Coldbrook Creek was also completed this summer as part of a study of impacts to fish and wildlife. Sampling results will be used to plan future remedial actions, as necessary.



Benthic community survey sampling



Water spider on Coldbrook Creek



Soil sampling along Coldbrook Creek

Cleanup of Oil-Water Separator #2 (IRM - Site #808043)

Approved interim remedial measure activities for the Oil-Water Separator #2 (OS2) on the Southern Tier Commerce Center (STCC) began late last year and continued through June 2020. This includes cleanup and disconnection of former industrial sewers to the drainage culvert which discharges to a wetland area



OS2 IRM

that drains to Coldbrook Creek, thus eliminating a suspected upstream source of contamination. OS2 work included installation of a new stormwater bypass in late 2019, the excavation and disposal of surrounding soils and contents of the OS2 in May 2020 and sealing the outlet from OS2 to the drainage culvert that discharges to the wetland area in June 2020. High groundwater levels have impacted the planned remediation of the concrete structure. Groundwater levels are being monitored and other removal or closure in place alternatives are being evaluated. The area is currently secured with fencing to deter public access and prevent exposures to impacted material.

Cleanup of Shallow Soils at STCC (IRM - Site #P808049)

A shallow soils interim remedial measure was completed at the STCC property in June 2020 and included the removal of approximately 5,800 tons of non-hazardous soil to a depth of up to two feet below ground from the fenced material storage area, located on the south end of STCC property and an area adjacent to the former recreation area on STCC property. After completion of the shallow soils IRM, disturbed areas were restored with clean fill and seeded. The activities completed as part of the shallow soil IRM will be summarized in a Construction Completion Report. Additional soil characterization activities adjacent to the IRM and open lawn areas will be proposed in an upcoming work plan.



Soil Sampling at STCC, Summer 2020

Next Steps

Enhanced Community Liaison Plan

In May 2019, Unisys developed a Community Liaison Plan (CLP) as a roadmap to the sources for information regarding the Elmira High School property and project activities that may be of interest to the public. This plan is routinely updated and can be found on the [DEC project webpage](#).

In anticipation of the start of the 2020-21 school year, an Enhanced Community Liaison Plan (ECLP) was prepared to highlight additional measures being implemented. The ECLP coincides with IRM activities that will continue, while high school classes are in session. The plan summarizes additional actions related to working safely at EHS which include coordination; site access limitations; safety and security; noise monitoring; and a code of conduct for site workers. It functions as a guide to project personnel and the community, providing the best means to communicate project information, answer questions, and raise issues and concerns to the proper sources for resolution. The plan contains the sources of information regarding the Former Sperry Remington Site – North Portion, Former Sperry Remington Site, and Former Scott Technologies Site (referred to jointly as the Sperry Sites), as well as those project activities that may generate public interest and inquiries.

Interim Remedial Measure (IRM) #4 Amendment

In September, Unisys began IRM #4 Amendment (IRM #4A), which will remove below-ground contaminated soil located north of the area of IRM #4 (see Figure 1) and will facilitate the transition between IRM #4 and IRM #5 work. During this work, normal access to EHS will be through the main and rear parking lots. Access to the locker room area was restored and a safe corridor created (protected from active construction) for emergency egress to the new rally point north of the tennis court.

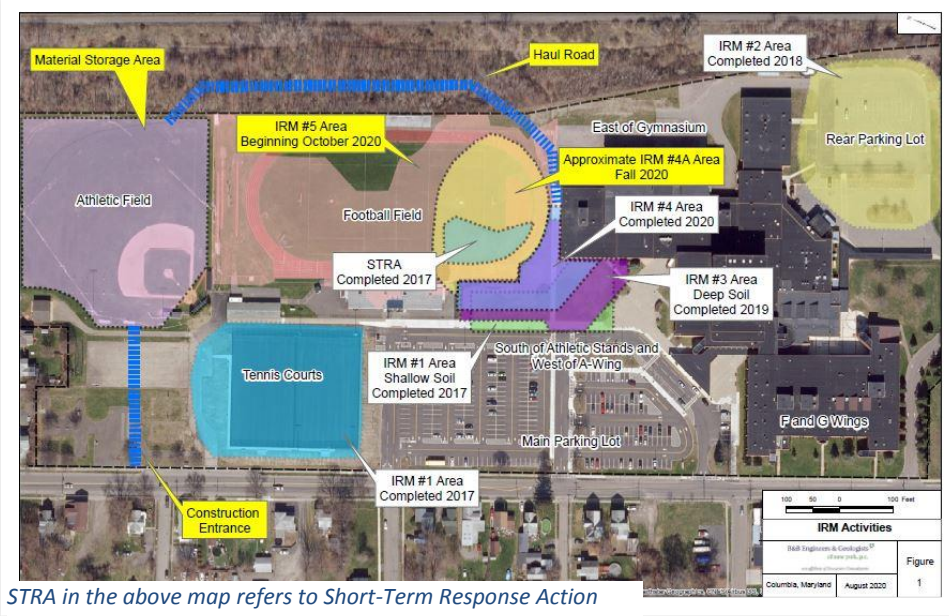
As part of IRM #4A, an estimated 8,600 tons of soil will be excavated and taken off-site for disposal at appropriate facilities or re-used as backfill if the soil meets cleanup standards. Excavated material will be transferred to the material storage area over a temporary haul road, prepared for disposal, or tested for re-use, and then loaded into clean, covered trucks for disposal. Operations will exit through the construction entrance to South Main Street and generally take place between 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday – Friday and 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. on weekends, as necessary, in accordance with the ECLP. The work areas identified in Figure 1 below, including excavation area, haul road, and material storage area, will not be accessible to the public for safety reasons. Traffic controls including flagmen and traffic control devices such as cones, signs, and barriers will be in use to ensure safe access for students, and school personnel, to and from the project site. IRM-related truck traffic to and from the project site will not occur during scheduled student arrival and release times. The restoration of the backfilled area will be coordinated with ECSD including the district's work on the new stadium complex.

CAMP monitoring will continue to measure airborne particulate matter and PCBs wherever contaminated soils may be disturbed during construction and excavation. Dust control measures (e.g., watering) will be taken to reduce dust on temporary dirt roadways and open excavations. Trucks will be covered to properly secure all material during transport. Trucks and equipment will be decontaminated prior to leaving the site. Truck traffic patterns are designed to maintain safety on local roadways. No visible dust should leave the work areas. If air monitors detect dust above action levels, work is stopped until corrective measures are undertaken.

IRM #5 Football Field Complex

Unisys, under DEC oversight, has completed comprehensive investigations at the EHS football field (IRM #5) to define the nature and extent of contamination. Cleanup plans are nearly complete to implement IRM #5 starting in early December. The remedial work will continue north from the IRM #4/4A area to encompass the track and football field and will utilize much of the same construction infrastructure (e.g., MSA, Haul Road) and approach to excavate to remove soils impacted by PCBs and metals (Figure 1). During remedial activities, there will be no access to the football field, track, and bleachers. Enhanced communications and construction precautions will be implemented to protect the health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors during normal EHS activities. Every effort will be made to minimize disruption to school activities.

Figure 1: Cleanup activities on EHS property



STRA in the above map refers to Short-Term Response Action

During remedial activities, there will be no access to the football field, track, and bleachers. Enhanced communications and construction precautions will be implemented to protect the health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors during normal EHS activities. Every effort will be made to minimize disruption to school activities.

Football Field Complex – Stadium Restoration

Elmira City School District will coordinate the construction of a new stadium and athletic complex after the remedial cleanup work is completed by Unisys.



Architectural rendering – Elmira High School Athletic Complex
https://www.elmiracityschools.com/news/what_s_new/new_elmira_high_school_stadium

Department of Health Outreach

DOH is working with the ECSD and the local community to learn about health concerns of current and former EHS staff. During recent public events and meetings, members of the school community and other stakeholders expressed concern about possible health-related impacts associated with contaminants present on the school grounds. DOH worked with a group of EHS representatives (survey workgroup) to address these concerns. The survey workgroup played a key role in creating and distributing a health outcome survey that was provided to 330 current and former EHS staff in November 2019. Information about the survey was also shared with the larger community via email, social media, and traditional media. Survey responses were received by DOH via a Survey Monkey online application, by mail, email, and telephone through the end of December 2019. The results of the survey were reviewed and are being summarized to share with the community at a later date. Due to the DOH COVID-19 response, the presentation of the survey results has been delayed. DOH is committed to working with the survey workgroup to further assess the responses and provide the community with a comprehensive summary.

Virtual Public Availability Session

DEC, DOH, Unisys and other experts will update the interested public about the ongoing investigation and cleanups at Elmira High School (EHS), Southern Tier Commerce Center (STCC) and along Coldbrook Creek at a virtual Public Availability Session via Zoom on December 3. The Zoom event will not include a formal presentation. Instead, project experts involved in the cleanups will be available to respond directly to questions and comments from the attending public. DEC created a companion website for the Public Availability Session. DEC invites the public to visit the companion website in advance of the Public Availability Session. The website features slides, photographs, maps and other information detailing the progress made to-date with each cleanup project. **A link to this companion website including Zoom registration will be posted prominently on DEC's Project Website one week prior to the Zoom event.**

Date: December 3, 2020

Time: 6-8 PM

Zoom Registration: (<https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/102390.html>) (please register early to avoid potential delays)

If you wish to have a private meeting, arrangements can be made to accommodate your needs.

Public Communications

Because the project involves a variety of stakeholders, it is important that up-to-date information and open lines of communication are available to the public., Enhanced communications have been added to the DEC webpage <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/102390.html> including:

- Updated Frequently Asked Questions.
- Project Hotline: To allow the public to submit inquiries 24 hours a day to the project team.
- IRM Information: Up-to-date IRM construction activities, scheduling, and air monitoring results.

WHERE TO FIND INFORMATION



Project documents are at these location(s):

Steele Memorial Library 101
East Church Street
Elmira, NY 14901
(607) 733-9175

Region 8 NYSDEC
Headquarters
6274 East Avon Lima Road
Avon, NY 14414
(585) 226-5324
(call for an appointment)

While repositories may be closed due to COVID-19 response, project documents are also available on the NYSDEC website at:
www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37556.html or
by contacting the Project Manager, Tim Schneider at timothy.schneider@dec.ny.gov

SIGN UP TO STAY INFORMED

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/61092.html>

