

Press Release

Region 2 - New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands



EPA Announces Commitment to Clean Up Contaminated Properties in Depew, New York

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(New York, NY—Sept. 15, 2008)-- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced today that it will begin cleanup work to address threats posed by lead-contaminated soil on residential properties in the Village of Depew, New York. EPA Regional Administrator Alan J. Steinberg was joined by Congressman Thomas Reynolds, and Village of Depew Mayor Barbara Alberti to announce EPA's commitment to the second phase of cleanup activities at the site; the first phase was completed in 2006. The homes that will be addressed in this second phase of the cleanup are located to the northwest and northeast of the Walden Avenue and Transit Road intersection.

"We were hopeful that the responsible parties would agree to do this work, but EPA refuses to wait any longer and will do the cleanup ourselves," said Mr. Steinberg. "This doesn't let the responsible parties off the hook, but it does mean that work can move forward and we can do what we need to do in order to ensure that these properties are addressed."

In 2003, at the behest of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), EPA took the lead at this site. NYSDEC provided EPA with soil sampling results that confirmed the presence of lead in surface and subsurface soil on the residential properties. Under EPA orders, NL Industries, Inc. conducted a cleanup of lead-contaminated soil at 36 homes. The cleanup was completed in 2006 and consisted of the removal and disposal of lead-contaminated soil, restoration of all remediated properties with clean backfill and topsoil, establishment of turf, as well as the replacement of landscaping. EPA continued its investigations and identified additional properties that had lead-contaminated soil at concentrations that warranted a cleanup. The second phase of EPA's cleanup efforts will address these newly-identified properties.

Data collected to-date suggest that facilities in the area of Depew, New York that produced large amounts of lead-contaminated waste could have contributed to the contamination found on the residential properties. EPA has notified four entities of their potential liability at the site. These entities include NL Industries, which conducted the first phase of the cleanup, Halliburton Company, Exide Technologies, and Gould Electronics, Inc.

In preparation for this next phase of the cleanup, EPA will host a series of public information sessions with the affected residents, at the Village of Depew Town Hall on Wednesday, October 1, from 3pm to 5pm, and on Thursday, October 2, from 2pm to 4pm, and 6pm to 8pm. The purpose of these sessions is to outline the proposed cleanup timeline and associated plans. Cleanup activities will include removal of lead-contaminated soil from the residential properties, removal of trees and shrubs, backfilling with topsoil and sod, replacement of landscaping, property restoration and off-site disposal of the contaminated soil.

For more information on EPA's Superfund program, including information on short-term cleanup activities, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/about.htm>.

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