



FACT SHEET

Investigation and Cleanup to Begin at the 1318 Niagara Street Site

Environmental Restoration Program

Project No. E915213

September 2009

Introduction

In September 2009, the City of Buffalo, with oversight provided by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), will begin investigating and cleaning up the 1318 Niagara Street Site (the site) in Buffalo, Erie County. The site is contaminated with petroleum wastes and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) – large bulky molecules that are oily in nature and slow to break down. PCBs had been used in electrical transformers but were banned in the 1970s because of their toxicity.

The City of Buffalo submitted a plan to NYSDEC for conducting a preliminary investigation into the extent of contamination at the site. It is available for public review at the locations identified below, as well as the DEC website.

In addition to investigation activities, the city will conduct an Interim Remedial Measure (IRM) to address certain environmental problems at the site. An IRM is a cleanup action that may be taken without extensive investigation to address an obvious problem that may impact human health or the environment.

Work at the site is being performed under the Environmental Restoration Program (ERP), which provides financial assistance to municipalities for the cleanup of brownfield sites. Brownfields typically are former industrial sites where the real or perceived presence of contamination complicates redevelopment.

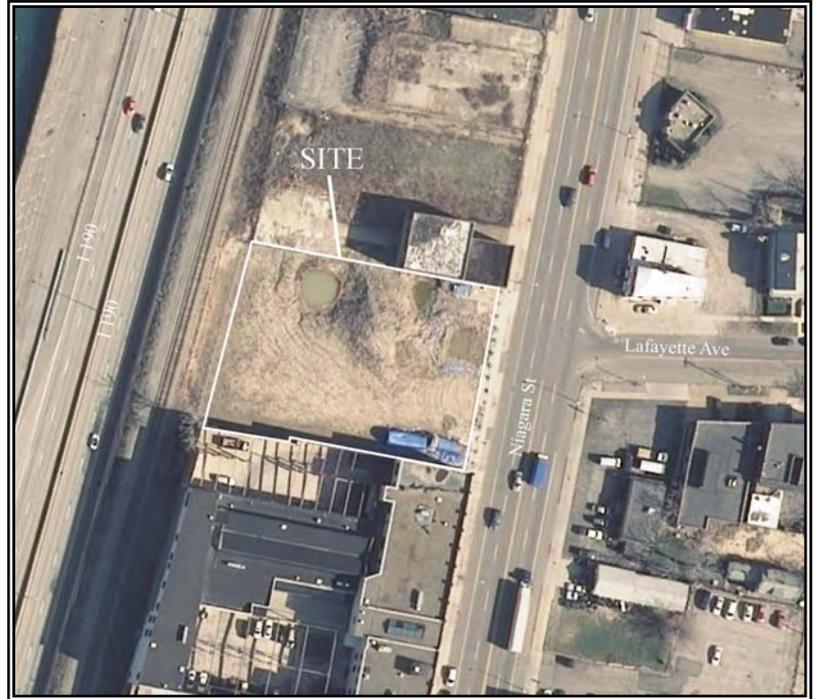
Background

The 1318 Niagara Street Site encompasses 0.77 acres in the western portion of the City of Buffalo. The site is surrounded by commercial and residential properties. It is not currently used and is secured with a temporary chain-link fence.

Prior to 1987 the site had been used as a brewery for at least eighty years. The City of Buffalo acquired the site through foreclosure and in 2006 began to demolish structures. During demolition, underground storage tanks (USTs) were discovered. The soils adjacent to the USTs, along with soils in the vicinity of the former brewery furnace, were contaminated with PCBs and various volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The contamination occurred due to the improper storage and/or handling of oil wastes by a previous site owner. Although the City was not responsible for contaminating the site, it requested to participate in the ERP to voluntarily clean it up.

What Will the Upcoming Investigation Involve?

The investigation will involve soil borings to collect samples for determining the extent of contamination. Sampling will begin within a given area and depth. If contamination is present, the sampling will continue to encompass an increased area and greater depth to determine how far and how deep the contamination extends.



Aerial view of the 1318 Niagara Street Site

Next Steps

Based on the findings of the preliminary investigation, the City will develop plans to complete a more thorough investigation of the site, including investigation of groundwater impacts. A summary of the investigation and alternatives for cleaning up the site will be presented in a document called the Remedial Investigation and Alternatives Analysis Report. NYSDEC will then recommend a specific course of action to address the contamination in a document called the Proposed Remedial Action Plan. These reports will be subject to public comment. The final course of action will be chosen only after NYSDEC holds a public meeting to discuss the recommended cleanup plan and considers public comment. NYSDEC is expected to issue the final cleanup plan sometime in 2010.

The preliminary investigation results will also be used to determine specific plans for conducting the Interim Remedial Measure.

What Will the Interim Remedial Measure Involve?

The IRM will primarily involve two cleanup actions, including:

- Removing USTs and chemical storage drums; and
- Excavating impacted surface soil and disposing it at a permitted treatment, storage, and disposal facility.

Who Should I Call If I Have Questions About the Site?

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

Environment Questions:

Mr. William Murray, P.E.
NYSDEC Region 9
270 Michigan Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14203
(716) 851-7220
wpmurray@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Health Questions:

Ms. Scarlett Messier
NYSDOH
547 River Street
Troy, New York 12180
(800) 458-1158 ext. 27860
DMR13@health.state.ny.us

Project Questions:

Mr. Dennis Sutton, C.P.G.
Planning, Development and Inspection Office
920 City Hall
Buffalo, New York 14202-3376
(716) 851-6587
DSutton@City-Bufferalo.com

If you know someone who would like to be added to the site contact list, have them contact the NYSDEC project manager above. 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.

Locations to View Project Documents

Project documents are available at the following locations to help the public stay informed.

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Central Branch

1 Lafayette Square
Buffalo, NY 14203
Phone: (716) 858-8900

NYSDEC Region 9 Office

270 Michigan Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14203
Phone: (716) 851-7220
(Please call for appointment)

The investigation work plan and the application to participate in the Environmental Restoration Program are available at these sites. You may also access documents on the NYSDEC Region 9 Remedial Project Information webpage, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37554.html>. Look for the 1318 Niagara Street entry under the Erie County heading.