

Cleanup Proposed for Brownfield Site Contamination; Public Comment Period Announced

The public is invited to comment on a proposed remedy being reviewed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), in consultation with the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), to address contamination related to the Former Refron Inc. Gas Reclamation site ("site") located at 38-18 33rd Street and 32-20 38th Avenue, Queens, New York. Please see the map for the site location. Based on the findings of the investigation, NYSDEC in consultation with the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has determined that the site does not pose a significant threat to public health or the environment.

How to Comment

NYSDEC is accepting written comments about the proposed plan, called a "Draft Remedial Action Work Plan (RAWP)" for 45 days, from **January 22, 2026 through March 8, 2026**.

- Access the RIR, RAWP, and other project documents online through the DECinfo Locator: <https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/data/DecDocs/C241285/>.
- Documents also are available at the location(s) identified under "Where to Find Information."
- Please submit comments to the NYSDEC project manager listed under Project-Related Questions in the "Contact Information" area.

Draft Remedial Action Work Plan

The proposed cleanup plan consists of:

- Excavation and off-site disposal of contaminated soil to approximately 2 feet below ground surface across the entire site and additional localized excavations for the removal of areas with elevated concentrations of contaminants down to 18 feet below grade;
- Collecting and analyzing post excavation soil and soil vapor samples to evaluate the effectiveness of the cleanup;
- Installation and operation of an active sub-slab depressurization system immediately beneath the concrete slabs of the new buildings;
- Importing clean material that meets the established soil cleanup objectives for use as backfill;
- Dewatering, as necessary, to accommodate remedial excavation;
- Implementing a Health and Safety Plan and Community Air Monitoring Plan during all ground intrusive activities;
- Implementation of a Site Management Plan (SMP) for long term maintenance of the mitigation systems; and
- Recording of an Environmental Easement to ensure proper use of the site.

The proposed cleanup plan was developed by 38-18 33rd Street LLC and 32-20 38th Avenue LLC (“applicants”) after performing a detailed investigation of the site under New York’s Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP).

Next Steps

NYSDEC will consider public comments, revise the remedy plan as necessary, and issue a final Decision Document. NYSDOH must concur with the proposed cleanup. After approval, the proposed cleanup becomes the selected cleanup. The applicant may then design and perform the cleanup action to address the site contamination, with oversight by NYSDEC and NYSDOH.

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

Site Description

The site is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of 38th Avenue and 33rd Street and is identified as Block 381, Lots 5 and 16 on the NYC Tax map. The site is approximately 29,750 square feet (0.683 acres). Former site uses were identified as a chemical laboratory from 1947 through at least 1950, manufacturing from 1970 to at least 2006, and has a history of operating as a chain manufacturing business, plumbing and heating supplies business, a refrigerant supply business, and an equipment supply business. Since January 2024, both lots on the site have been vacant.

The proposed redevelopment includes the demolition of the current site buildings for the construction of three new mixed-use buildings with commercial use on the ground floor and residential uses on the floors above. The new buildings are planned to include approximately 20% affordable housing units.

Additional site details, including environmental and health assessment summaries, are available on NYSDEC’s Environmental Site Remediation Database (by entering the site ID, C241285) at:

<https://appfactory.dec.ny.gov/DERExternalSearch/ERDSearch>

Summary of the Investigation

The primary contaminants of concern at the site are semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), specifically polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and metals in soil; chlorinated volatile organic compounds (CVOCs) and metals in groundwater; volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in soil vapor.

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 site is any real property where a contaminant is present at levels exceeding the soil cleanup objectives or other health-based or environmental standards, criteria or guidance adopted by DEC that are applicable based on the reasonably anticipated use of the property, in accordance with applicable regulations.

For more information about the BCP, visit:

<https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/site-cleanup/brownfield-and-state-superfund-programs/brownfield>

Stay Informed with DEC Delivers

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.

Sign up to receive site updates by email:

<https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/site-cleanup/regional-remediation-project-information/environmental-cleanup-email-newsletters>

Note: Please disregard if you already have signed up and received this fact sheet electronically.

DECinfo Locator

Interactive map to access DEC documents and public data about the environmental quality of specific sites: <https://dec.ny.gov/maps/interactive-maps/decinfo-locator>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Project-Related Questions

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Project-Related Health Questions

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WHERE TO FIND INFORMATION

Access project documents through the DECinfo Locator and at these location(s):
<https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/data/DecDocs/C241285/>

Queens Public Library at Long Island City

37-44 21 Street
Long Island City, NY 11101
(718) 752-3700

Queens Community Board No. 1

45-02 Ditmars Boulevard, LL Suite 1025
Astoria, NY 11105
(718) 626-1021

Site Location





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