

# 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 at

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

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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) are continuing strict oversight of the ongoing investigation and cleanup activities at the Elmira High School (EHS) property. This oversight will ensure a comprehensive and careful cleanup that is protective of public health and the environment. The agencies are also committed to keeping the Elmira community informed regarding the cleanup progress. Our top priority is ensuring that students, faculty, staff, and visitors will not be exposed to the below-ground site-related contamination. Unisys Corporation (Unisys), the corporate successor of the Remington Rand company, is committed under its legal agreement with New York State to fully investigate and implement a comprehensive cleanup of the site, and any impacted off-site areas, consistent with the requirements of the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP).

**The purpose of this newsletter is to provide the community an update on recently completed activities and upcoming investigation and cleanup activities at EHS (#C808022), and two adjacent projects, the Former Sperry Remington Site (#808043) and Former Scott Technologies Site (#808049) (referred to collectively as the former Sperry Sites)**

Concurrent with the comprehensive cleanup activities at EHS, the Elmira City School District (ECSD) started construction activities related to a new athletic complex, including a new turf field, track, bleachers, scoreboards, bathrooms, and sound system.

## Project Webpage and Updated Enhanced Community Liaison Plan

In September 2020, Unisys developed an Enhanced Community Liaison Plan (ECLP) as a roadmap to the available resources regarding project activities at the former Sperry Sites that may be of interest to the public.

This plan has been updated in preparation for the 2022-23 school year. A copy of the updated plan is included in this mailing and can also be found on the project webpage at:

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

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.

## Interim Remedial Measures at Elmira High School

### Ongoing IRM Activities:

Since 2017, multiple Interim Remedial Measures (IRMs) were implemented at EHS under DEC oversight to remove soils impacted by PCBs and other site-related constituents and future IRMs are planned, as presented below (Figure 1).

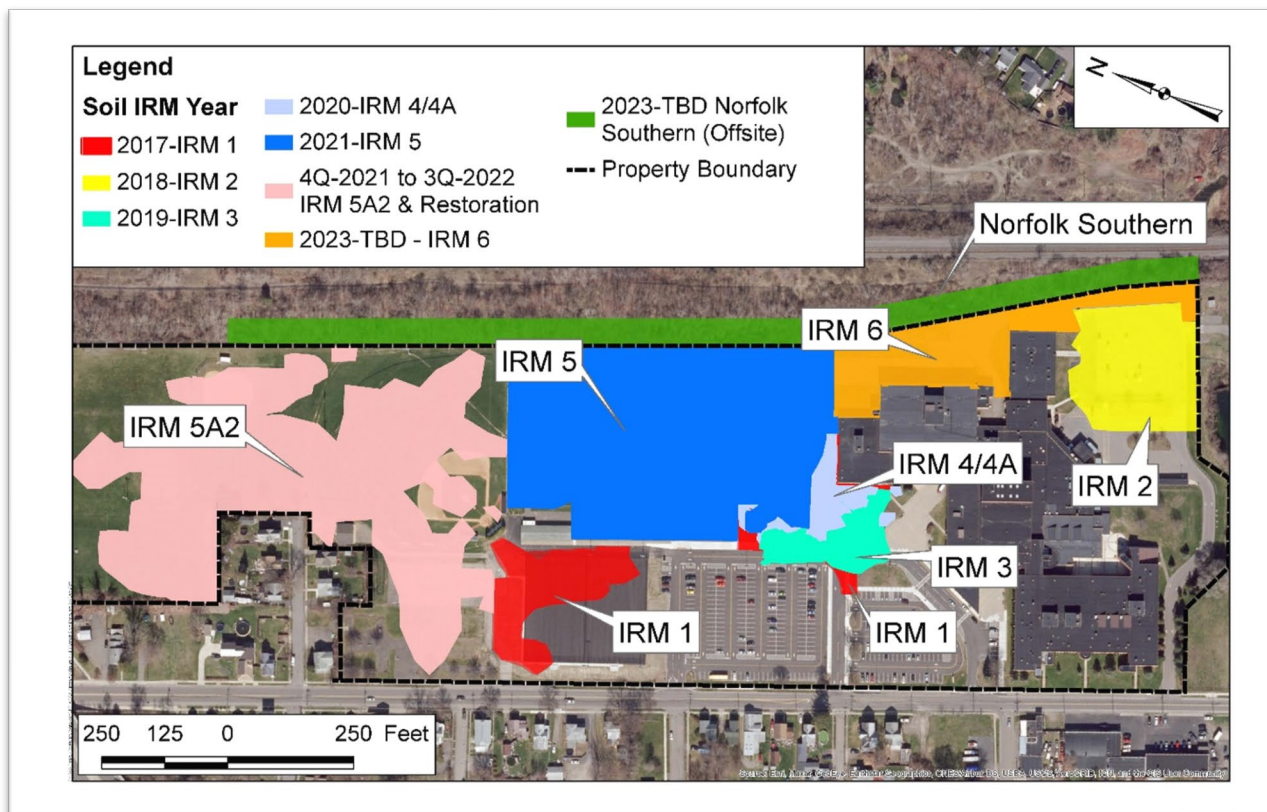


Figure 1: Planned and Completed IRM Cleanup Activities on EHS Property

Unisys began the current IRM #5 Amendment 2 (IRM #5A2) October 2021, to remove contaminated soils and former industrial sewers from the EHS athletic fields north of the football field (NAF). To date, an

estimated 67,600 cubic yards of soil (approximately 69,000 tons) were excavated and disposed of off-site at approved facilities. Excavation and waste shipment are ongoing (Figure 2).



*Figure 2: IRM #5A2 May 2022 (looking south)*

A temporary and limited construction access point will be re-established on Main Street during July and August to complete the final small portion of IRM 5A2 north of the tennis courts. Construction activities and traffic will be limited and full safety, monitoring, and dust control programs will be implemented.

### **Completed IRM Activities:**

Recent IRMs north of the EHS building were implemented in coordination with ECSD capital construction plans for the new EHS stadium complex and athletic fields. All areas associated with IRMs #4, #4A, and #5 have been backfilled with imported clean fill and/or re-use material that meets cleanup standards.

For each IRM, safety measures are implemented to ensure safe access for students, school personnel and visitors to and from the EHS property. IRM-related truck traffic to and from the project site does not occur during scheduled student arrival and release times and is coordinated with ECSD for other events.

As work is implemented, DEC and DOH require a Community Air Monitoring Plan to measure airborne particulate matter. Dust concentrations are continuously monitored during remediation and construction activities. Airborne PCB vapors are monitored when remediation activities are occurring in soil with PCB concentrations known or suspected to be greater than 50 mg/kg. Dust control measures (e.g., watering) are implemented to reduce dust on temporary dirt roadways and open excavations. If air monitors detect dust above action levels, work is stopped until corrective measures are implemented.

Trucks are covered to properly secure all material during transport. Trucks and equipment are decontaminated prior to leaving the site. Truck traffic patterns have been designed to maintain safety on local roadways.

Table 1 sets out a summary of the excavation, disposal and reuse activities associated with IRM #4, IRM #4A, IRM #5, and IRM #5A2.

Table 1: IRMs by the Numbers

	<b>IRM #4 (June to August 2020)</b>	<b>IRM #4A (September 2020 to April 2021)</b>	<b>IRM #5 (December 2020 to April 2022)</b>	<b>IRM #5A2 (October 2021 to Present – all ongoing)</b>
Soil Excavated	6,500 cubic yards	9,962 cubic yards	59,260 cubic yards	67,600 cubic yards
Disposed Off-Site as Hazardous Waste	4,079 tons	9,064 tons	38,000 tons	~14,000 tons
Disposed Off-Site as Non-Hazardous Waste	3,977 tons	3,686 tons	49,000 tons	~55,000 tons
Soil Reused as Backfill	1,987 tons	1,200 tons	18,000 tons	NA
Fill Imported for Backfill and Soil Cover	7,993 tons	5,958 tons	70,000 tons	~39,000 tons

Note: Excavation measurements are cubic yards and disposal is measured as tons. For this Site, the conversion is 1 cubic yard = 1.9 ton  
IRM #5A2 Excavation and disposal numbers – through mid-May 2022

The activities completed as part of IRM #4, IRM #4A, IRM #5, and IRM #5A2 will be summarized in a Construction Completion Report (CCR).

## Elmira High School Stadium Restoration

ECSD has been coordinating the construction of the new stadium and athletic complex in phases as the remedial cleanup work is completed by Unisys., This construction work will not negatively impact the ongoing remedial program, as DEC will ensure protection of public health and the environment during the project. The football field complex portion (see Figures 3) of the athletic complex is anticipated to be ready by Fall 2022.



Figure 3: Architectural Rendering - Elmira High School Athletic Complex (looking north)  
([https://www.elmiracityschools.com/news/what\\_s\\_new/new\\_elmira\\_high\\_school\\_stadium](https://www.elmiracityschools.com/news/what_s_new/new_elmira_high_school_stadium))

## Comprehensive Remedial Investigation (Site C808022)

Between 2015 and 2021 Unisys completed soil sampling to depths of 16 feet below ground -- the approximate depth of groundwater -- across the majority of the EHS site, as well as below the groundwater table in areas where deeper contaminant source zones were suspected. The remedial investigation activities have guided the previously completed and on-going IRM actions. The remedial investigation is on-going for the remainder of the site. Soil sampling was conducted to determine the off-site extent of potentially impacted soil to the east of the gymnasium and on several residential properties along O’Gorman and South Main Streets in June and October 2021, respectively. Groundwater investigation activities were completed, including the installation of permanent groundwater monitoring wells across the site, in addition to the railroad right-of-way.

Additional delineation and characterization of contaminants in soil is planned along the southeastern and southern portions of the site (Summer-Fall 2022) to support future on-site cleanup plans. An additional groundwater investigation was conducted in 2021 to identify areas where contaminant concentrations exceed state screening levels. More focused groundwater investigation is planned to the east of the site to document concentrations in the direction of groundwater flow (Summer 2022).

## Interim Site Management Plan (Site C808022)

DEC and DOH have approved the Interim Site Management Plan (ISMP) as developed by Unisys for the EHS property. The ISMP monitors and maintains the engineering controls, including cover system barriers (e.g., concrete floors, pavement, mulch beds, clean and vegetated soil) and sub-slab depressurization systems (SSDSs). The existing and newly constructed cover system reduces the potential of exposure to below-ground contamination or remaining impacts. The ISMP includes measures to monitor and maintain the SSDSs that are installed in portions of the EHS building. The SSDSs are operating continuously and prevents potentially impacted vapors from entering the indoor area. If deficiencies are found in the engineering controls, actions will be taken to quickly address these deficiencies. ISMP monitoring and inspections are conducted quarterly.

During the summer (July and August) and Winter (December) of 2021, indoor air, outdoor air, SSDS exhaust sampling and differential pressure readings were performed at the EHS building. This sampling was conducted to document that the SSDSs in the EHS building were operating as designed, and sufficiently mitigating the vapor intrusion pathway (the migration of compounds from sub-surface soil vapor sources to the indoor air of the building). Indoor air, outdoor air, and SSDS exhaust samples were analyzed for VOCs and PCBs. Indoor air and outdoor air samples for VOC analysis were collected over a seven-day time period.

Results of the air sampling and pressure monitoring indicate that the SSDSs are operating as designed, and effectively mitigating the vapor intrusion pathway. Continued operation of the SSDSs is recommended to mitigate the potential for vapor intrusion.

Any ground intrusive actions completed at EHS are subject to the Excavation Work Plan as part of the ISMP. Notifications have been submitted to notify the DEC of ground intrusive work being planned as part of the ECSD athletic complex and field restoration construction activities at EHS. The Excavation Work Plan and corresponding notifications ensures that all ground intrusive actions are completed in accordance with the ISMP and is protective of public health and the environment.

## Remedial Investigation: Coldbrook Creek Sampling (Site 808043)

Unisys identified the downstream extent of impacted sediments in Coldbrook Creek and is investigating the extent of impacted soils along the creek banks and in the flood zone. Phase II of this investigation was implemented in July and August 2020 and included soil samples from 32 parcels along Coldbrook Creek and sediment sampling within Coldbrook Creek. Phase III of this investigation was implemented in Summer 2021, including collection of additional soil samples to further delineate constituents of concern at several previously sampled locations, and investigate potential constituents of concern at remaining unsampled parcels. Unisys, DEC, and DOH are currently assessing the need for further delineation of constituents of concern for a few parcels during Summer/Fall 2022. Sampling results will be used to plan future remedial actions, as necessary.

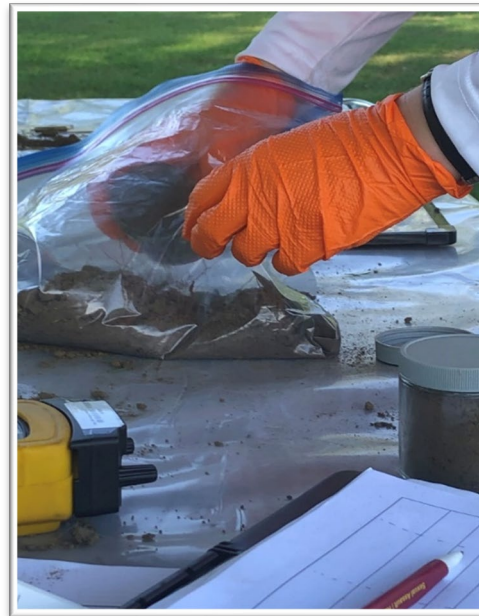


Figure 5: Overbank Sample Collection

Additionally, fish and wildlife impact analysis sampling was completed in July and August 2020 which included collection and testing of sediment and fish tissue, and a benthic community survey. An assortment of edible fish were also collected for chemical analysis to evaluate contaminant impacts and assess potential human exposure pathways. Elevated levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were found in fish and therefore, DOH has issued the following advice regarding the consumption of fish taken from Coldbrook Creek:

Waterbody	Fish	Advice for Men Over 15 and Women over 50	Advice for Women under 50 and Children under 15
Coldbrook Creek	All fish	DON'T EAT	DON'T EAT

For more information about eating the fish you catch in the Finger Lakes Region, information about chemicals commonly found in fish, and how DOH sets fish advisories, visit: [www.health.ny.gov/fish](http://www.health.ny.gov/fish).

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

Approved IRM activities for the Oil-Water Separator (OS2) on the Southern Tier Commerce Center (STCC) were conducted in late 2019 and were completed in summer 2020. This work included sewer line cleaning followed by the installation of a new storm water bypass, excavation and disposal of surrounding soils and contents of OS2 and sealing the outlet from OS2 to the drainage culvert that discharges to the wetland area that drains to Coldbrook Creek. Planned removal of the concrete structure has been precluded due to unanticipated high groundwater levels. A Construction Completion Report (CCR) summarizing completed activities for OS2 was submitted to DEC in April 2022 and is being reviewed.

The area is on private property and is currently secured with fencing to deter access and prevent exposures to impacted material while other removal or closure alternatives are being evaluated. A work plan for further onsite investigation activities has been submitted to DEC, which is being reviewed.



*Figure 6: OS2 Structure*

## Former Scott Technologies Site: Site Characterization (Site 808049)

A site characterization order was issued in July 2014 and site characterization investigations were conducted under DEC-approved work plans. An IRM work plan was completed in June of 2020 to address impacted shallow soils and former Material Storage Area (MSA). A CCR for the shallow soils IRM was submitted in May 2021 and approved by DEC on 23 June 2021.

Additional delineation and characterization of the extent of constituents of potential concern in the site holding pond and adjacent properties is planned for this summer to supplement previous environmental investigations and determine next steps.

## Public Communications

### 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:  
<https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37556.html> or  
by contacting the Project Manager, Tim Schneider at [timothy.schneider@dec.ny.gov](mailto:timothy.schneider@dec.ny.gov)

The project involves a variety of stakeholders; 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, monitoring, and health and safety information.

### SIGN UP TO STAY INFORMED

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

