

Le Mars, Iowa, Site Proposed for Addition to Superfund National Priorities List

EPA updates Superfund NPL, taking action to address risks to public health and build a better America

March 17, 2022

Contact Information

David W. Bryan, APR (bryan.david@epa.gov)
913-551-7433



LENEXA, KAN. (MARCH 17, 2022) - Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed adding five Superfund sites to the National Priorities List (NPL), including the Highway 3 PCE Site in Le Mars, Iowa. The NPL includes sites where releases of contamination pose significant human health and environmental risks.

Before EPA adds a site to the NPL, a site must meet EPA's requirements and be proposed for addition to the list in the Federal Register, subject to a 60-day public comment period. EPA will add the site to the NPL if it continues to meet the listing requirements after the public comment period closes and the Agency has responded to any comments.

The Highway 3 PCE Site (site) is located southeast of the intersection of Plymouth Street West (Iowa Highway 3) and Central Avenue Northeast in Le Mars. EPA discovered the site in April 2008 during an investigation conducted for the nearby Le Mars Coal Gas Plant Site. Groundwater sampling identified the presence of tetrachloroethene (PCE) and its breakdown products. Those contaminants were determined not to be associated with the Le Mars Coal Gas Plant Site.

In today's announcement, EPA also said it is adding 12 sites to the NPL across the country. Cleaning up contaminated sites is important for the health, safety, and revitalization of communities.

“No community deserves to have contaminated sites near where they live, work, play, and go to school. Nearly two out of three of the sites being proposed or added to the priorities list are in overburdened or underserved communities,” said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan. “EPA is building a better America by taking action to clean up some of the nation’s most contaminated sites, protect communities’ health, and return contaminated land to safe and productive reuse for future generations.”

Thousands of contaminated sites, from landfills, processing plants, to manufacturing facilities exist nationally due to hazardous waste being dumped, left out in the open, or otherwise improperly managed. President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will accelerate EPA’s work to help communities clean up these contaminated sites with a \$3.5 billion investment in the Superfund Remedial Program and reinstates the Superfund chemical excise taxes, making it one of the largest investments in American history to address legacy pollution. This historic investment strengthens EPA’s ability to tackle threats to human health and the environment, and EPA has already set action in motion to clear the backlog of the 49 contaminated sites which had been awaiting funding to start remedial action.

Superfund cleanups provide health and economic benefits to communities. The program is credited for significant reductions in both birth defects and blood-lead levels among children living near sites, and research has shown that residential property values increase up to 24% within 3 miles of sites after cleanup.

Further, thanks to Superfund cleanups, communities are now using previously blighted properties for a wide range of purposes, including retail businesses, office space, public parks, residences, warehouses, and solar power generation. As of 2021, EPA has collected economic data on 650 Superfund sites. At these sites, there are 10,230 businesses operating, 246,000 people employed, an estimated \$18.6 billion in income earned by employees, and \$65.8 billion in sales generated by businesses.

With this Superfund NPL update, the Biden-Harris administration is following through on its commitment to update the NPL twice a year, as opposed to once a year.

EPA is adding the following sites to the NPL:

- Lower Neponset River, Boston/Milton, Massachusetts
- Meeker Avenue Plume, Brooklyn, New York
- Bear Creek Sediments, Baltimore County, Maryland
- Paden City Groundwater, Paden City, West Virginia
- Westside Lead, Atlanta, Georgia
- Galey and Lord Plant, Society Hill, South Carolina
- National Fireworks, Cordova, Tennessee

- North 5th Street Groundwater Contamination, Goshen, Indiana
- Michner Plating – Mechanic Street, Jackson, Michigan
- Southeast Hennepin Area Groundwater and Vapor, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Unity Auto Mart, Unity, Wisconsin
- Bradford Island, Cascade Locks, Oregon

EPA is proposing to add the following sites to the NPL:

- **Highway 3 PCE, Le Mars, Iowa**
- Lower Hackensack River, Bergen and Hudson counties, New Jersey
- Brillo Landfill, Victory, New York
- Georgetown North Groundwater, Georgetown, Delaware
- Hercules Inc, Hattiesburg, Mississippi

EPA is also withdrawing a previously proposed site, following the Agency's determination that placing the site on the NPL is not needed to protect human health and the environment. The Agency is withdrawing a proposal to add the Riverside Groundwater Contamination Site in Indianapolis, Indiana, to the NPL. The Indiana Department of Environmental Management is advancing the site's cleanup at the same standards as an EPA-led cleanup. EPA uses all available tools to ensure the protection of human health and the environment, and various non-NPL site cleanup alternatives may be more appropriate to meet a specific site's cleanup needs.

Background

The National Priorities List (NPL) includes the nation's most serious uncontrolled or abandoned releases of contamination. The list serves as the basis for prioritizing EPA Superfund cleanup funding and enforcement actions. Only releases at sites included on the NPL are eligible to receive federal funding for long-term, permanent cleanup

EPA proposes sites to the NPL based on a scientific determination of risks to people and the environment, consistent with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan.

[Learn more](#) about Superfund and the NPL.

For Federal Register notices and supporting documents for NPL and proposed sites, please visit [EPA's website](#).

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