



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

**Department of Environmental
Conservation**

DIVISION OF SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE
Contaminated Sites Program

610 University Avenue
Fairbanks, AK 99709-3643
Phone: (907) 451-2143
Fax: (907) 451-2155
www.dec.alaska.gov

DEC File No: 425.38.005

September 6, 2023

Cathe Grosshandler
USPS Facility Engineer/Project Manager
8221 Petersburg Street
Anchorage, AK 99507

Re: Decision Document: USPS Point Lay Post Office
Cleanup Complete Determination

Dear Ms. Grosshandler:

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Contaminated Sites Program (DEC) has completed a review of the environmental records associated with the USPS Point Lay Post Office (USPS Pt Lay) located at the intersection of Sisuagvik Ave and Kavuuqtualuk Street in Point Lay. Based on the information provided to date, it has been determined that the contaminant concentrations remaining on site do not pose an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment and no further remedial action will be required unless information becomes available that indicates residual contaminants may pose an unacceptable risk.

This Cleanup Complete determination is based on the administrative record for the USPS Pt Lay site maintained by DEC. This decision letter summarizes the site history, cleanup actions and levels, and site closure conditions that apply.

Site Name and Location:

USPS Point Lay Post Office
69.74619, -163.0096
Point Lay, Alaska 99759

Name and Mailing Address of Contact Party:

Cathe Grosshandler
USPS Project Manager
8221 Petersburg Street
Anchorage, AK 99507

DEC Site Identifiers:

File No.: 425.38.005
Hazard ID.: 4182

Regulatory Authority for Determination:

18 Alaska Administrative Code (AAC) 75

Site Description and Background

The former Point Lay post office site (Figure 1) consists of a 3700 square foot parcel with a 600 square foot structure and an associated 500 gallon above ground storage tank (AST) on the west side of the structure. The property was leased by the USPS during the years of its operation from the late 1970s until 1999 and is currently privately owned.



Figure 1. USPS Pt Lay former post office.

In June 1997, approximately 200 gallons of heating oil was released to the ground due to a piping valve failure. The North Slope Borough emergency spill response team conducted initial cleanup activities including absorbing free product pooled on the permafrost layer, which is 4-6 feet (ft) below ground surface (bgs). The site is above the Arctic Circle and no groundwater was observed above the permafrost layer; it is unlikely that groundwater flows to nearby surface water.

Contaminants of Concern

Gasoline Range Organics (GRO) is the only contaminant of concern (COC) at the site.

Cleanup Levels

The following cleanup levels apply for the USPS Pt Lay site:

- 18 AAC 75 Table B2 Method Two Arctic Zone soil cleanup levels

Table 1 – Approved Cleanup Levels and Maximum Remaining Concentration in Soil

Contaminant	Method Two Ingestion/Inhalation Soil Cleanup Level (mg/kg)	Maximum Remaining Soil Concentration (mg/kg)
GRO	1400	17.7

Notes: mg/kg = milligrams per kilogram

Characterization and Cleanup Activities

During the initial spill response effort in 1997, approximately 8 cubic yards of soil was excavated. The team used absorbent pads to clean up the free product observed on top of the permafrost layer. No samples were collected at that time.

In July 2005, six soil borings were advanced and analytical samples collected in an effort to characterize and delineate the soil contamination. Samples were analyzed for diesel range organics, GRO, residual range organics, benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylenes. Only one sample exceeded DEC's Method Two Arctic Zone soil cleanup levels for GRO with a concentration of 1,530 mg/kg.

In August 2022, ten analytical soil samples were collected from soil borings and two temporary well points were advanced. No water was encountered, but ice was encountered between 4-6 ft bgs in all bore and well point holes. There were no exceedances of Method Two Human Health Arctic Zone cleanup levels. Nearby surface water is not impacted as there is no evidence of groundwater migration above the permafrost layer.

Cumulative Risk Evaluation

Pursuant to 18 AAC 75.325(g), when detectable contamination remains on-site following a cleanup, a cumulative risk determination must be made that the risk from hazardous substances does not exceed a cumulative carcinogenic risk standard of 1 in 100,000 across all exposure pathways and does not exceed a cumulative noncarcinogenic risk standard at a hazard index (HI) of 1 across all exposure pathways.

Based on a review of the environmental record, DEC has determined that residual contaminant concentrations meet the human health cumulative risk criteria for residential land use.

Exposure Pathway Evaluation

Following investigation and cleanup at the site, exposure to the remaining contaminants was evaluated using DEC's Exposure Tracking Model (ETM). Exposure pathways are the conduits by which contamination may reach human or ecological receptors. ETM results show all pathways to be incomplete. A summary of this pathway evaluation is included in Table 2.

Table 2 – Exposure Pathway Evaluation

Pathway	Result	Explanation
Surface Soil Contact	Pathway Incomplete	Contamination is not present in surface soil (0 to 2 feet below ground surface).
Subsurface Soil Contact	Pathway De minimis	Contamination in the subsurface is below human health levels in 18 AAC 75.341, Table B2.
Inhalation – Outdoor Air	Pathway Incomplete	Contamination in the subsurface is below human health levels in 18 AAC 75.341, Table B2.
Inhalation – Indoor Air (vapor intrusion)	Pathway Incomplete	Contamination in the subsurface is below inhalation levels in 18 AAC 75.341, Table B2.
Groundwater Ingestion	Pathway Incomplete	Groundwater is not present at the site above the permafrost layer.
Surface Water Ingestion	Pathway Incomplete	Groundwater is not present above the permafrost layer at the site and is not hydrologically connected to nearby surface water.
Wild and Farmed Foods Ingestion	Pathway Incomplete	Contaminants of concern do not have the potential to bioaccumulate in plants or animals.
Exposure to Ecological Receptors	Pathway Incomplete	Ecological receptors are not likely affected.

Notes: "Pathway Incomplete" means that, in DEC's judgment, the contamination has no potential to contact receptors.

DEC Decision

Soil and groundwater contamination at the site have been cleaned up to concentrations below the approved cleanup levels suitable for residential land use. This site will receive a "Cleanup Complete" designation on the Contaminated Sites Database.

DEC approval is required for movement and disposal of soil and/or groundwater subject to the Site Cleanup Rules, in accordance with 18 AAC 75.325(i). Since the cleanup at this site met the most stringent cleanup levels of 18 AAC 75.341, Tables B1 and B2 and 18 AAC 75.345, Table C, this letter will serve as your approval for future movement and disposal of soil associated with this release.

Movement or use of contaminated material in an ecologically sensitive area or in a manner that results in a violation of 18 AAC 70 water quality standards is prohibited. Furthermore, groundwater throughout Alaska

is protected for use as a water supply for drinking, culinary and food processing, agriculture including irrigation and stock watering, aquaculture, and industrial use. Contaminated site cleanup complete determinations are based on groundwater being considered a potential drinking water source. If, in the future, groundwater from this site is to be used for other purposes, additional testing and treatment may be required to ensure the water is suitable for its intended use.

This determination is in accordance with 18 AAC 75.380 and does not preclude DEC from requiring additional assessment and/or cleanup action if information indicates that contaminants at this site may pose an unacceptable risk to human health, safety, or welfare or to the environment.

Informal Reviews and Adjudicatory Hearings

A person authorized under a provision of 18 AAC 15 may request an informal review of a contested decision by the Division Director in accordance with 18 AAC 15.185 and/or an adjudicatory hearing in accordance with 18 AAC 15.195 – 18 AAC 15.340. See DEC’s “Appeal a DEC Decision” web page <https://dec.alaska.gov/commish/review-guidance/> for access to the required forms and guidance on the appeal process. Please provide a courtesy copy of the adjudicatory hearing request in an electronic format to the parties required to be served under 18 AAC 15.200. Requests must be submitted no later than the deadline specified in 18 AAC 15.

If you have questions about this closure decision, please feel free to contact me at (907) 451-2881, or email at shonda.oderkirk@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Shonda Oderkirk

Shonda Oderkirk
Project Manager

cc, via email: DEC, Division of Spill Prevention and Response, Cost Recovery Unit
Nick Waldo, DEC