



BROWNFIELD CLEANUP BEGINS AT THE FORMER UNIVERSAL RECYCLING SITE IN FAIRBANKS

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The Department of Environmental Conservation – Contaminated Sites Program (DEC), the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), and The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Region 10 office (EPA) announce the beginning of cleanup operations at the Former Universal Recycling contaminated site in Fairbanks.

The problem

Contamination found at the 400 Sanduri Street location includes PCBs, metals, lead-acid batteries, and barrels of petroleum and hazardous substances. Past operations there included refuse collection, recycling, and waste-to-energy treatment.

The site is close to a mobile home park and an industrial area. More than 30 percent of the residential population is under 18 years of age, and these children could be exposed to contaminants while trespassing on the site. In fact, investigators found evidence of a skateboard park on the site fashioned from site debris.

Background

FNSB foreclosed on the property in 2003 and has worked diligently to clean it up ever since. The work began in 2004 with a DEC Brownfield Assessment, which encompassed a Phase I and limited Phase II environmental site assessment.

Also in 2004, the borough was awarded an EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant for \$199,998 to complete the Phase II (more in-depth) assessment. The need to clear a large amount of debris from the site prevented completion of the assessment work, and a waste disposal plan was

developed. This plan estimates cleanup costs are \$604,000. Funding for this cleanup project includes a \$200,000 EPA cleanup grant with a local match of \$40,000, a borough appropriation of \$182,000, and a borough tipping fee deferral of up to \$182,000.

What's next?

When the former Universal Recycling site is cleaned up, the borough hopes it will become viable light-industrial property. This redevelopment will create jobs, increase revenue, reduce the tax burden on the community, and address the health risks associated with the contamination.

Reuse and redevelopment in Alaska

Through its Reuse and Redevelopment Initiative, DEC has conducted at least 23 environmental site assessments in the past four years at eligible brownfield sites. DEC Brownfield Assessments help reduce the environmental uncertainties that may hinder the reuse or redevelopment of brownfields, and provide critical information to those wishing to clean up and redevelop brownfields in Alaska.

For more information on DEC's Reuse and Redevelopment Initiative or DEC Brownfield Assessments, please visit DEC's Brownfields website:

www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/csp/brownfields.htm

Or, contact:

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— Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Contaminated Sites Program