

## **REMACOR SITE**



### **Introduction**

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (“Department”), Hazardous Sites Cleanup Program has completed a Remedial Investigation and Building Survey of the Remacor Site (Site), located in West Pittsburg, Taylor Township, Lawrence County. This Fact Sheet summarizes the findings of Site investigations and proposed future actions.

### **Site Background**

The Remacor Site is a 45-acre industrial facility that was in operation from 1975 to 2006. Ten of the former manufacturing buildings remain on Site. The facility processed secondary magnesium scrap into magnesium powder and granules for use as a desulfurization agent in the steel industry. Wastes generated from magnesium processing were disposed on Site.

Additionally, the magnesium fines, turnings, and shavings used in the processing were ignitable and classified as hazardous materials.

Former activities at the Site also involved the production of mischmetal, which is used in the steel industry as a desulfurization agent and in the film-making industry for special effects. Mischmetal is composed of 50% cerium, 25% lanthanum and a 25% mixture of neodymium, praseodymium and other rare earth metals. Production of this material resulted in the formation of Technologically Enhanced Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (TENORM) waste that was disposed on Site.

### **EPA Emergency Removal**

In 2007, the combined efforts of 18 magnesium generators and the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)

removed over 6.7 million pounds of magnesium material from the Site. Over 15 million pounds of various other waste materials were also removed from the Site including spent anodes, lab packs, and excavated lead and arsenic contaminated soil. Over 300,000 pounds of low level radioactive material was removed and disposed in an offsite facility.

### **History of Investigation**

US EPA and Department contractors conducted investigations of the Site between 2007 and 2015 to characterize and evaluate environmental and building conditions. Site investigations identified soils, wastes, and groundwater impacted with metals, volatile organic compounds, and radiological contaminants. Although several areas of soil impacts were found near buildings, contractors were unable to completely characterize radiological contamination within, under, and directly adjacent to certain buildings due to their deteriorated and unsafe conditions. A Building Engineering Survey completed in 2011 determined that the remaining Site buildings are not economically reusable and should be demolished. Many of the buildings have deteriorated significantly since then. Additionally, a 2015 Building Radiological survey found elevated levels of radiological contaminants inside several of the buildings.

### **Objectives and Response**

The following remedial action objectives were identified for buildings on the Site:

- Protect the public and environmental receptors from direct contact exposure to radiologically contaminated building materials and physical risks associated with structurally unsound buildings.
- Demolish structurally unsound buildings so that future investigation and

remediation of radiologically and chemically contaminated Site soils can be completed to protect the public and environmental receptors from Site-related hazardous substances.

- Comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

To address Site buildings, the Department developed three remedial action alternatives:

- 1.) No action, which is required for all alternative comparisons;
- 2.) Building demolition and shipment of all demolition debris offsite; and
- 3.) Building demolition and shipment of radiologically contaminated building debris offsite with clean material used onsite.

Alternative # 3 is the proposed action for the Site. Demolition of buildings and selective removal of Site wastes meets the remedial action objectives of the Site and provides the most cost-effective alternative. Alternative 3 will effectively reduce or eliminate the direct contact exposure to radiologically impacted building materials and facilitate future investigation and remediation of contaminated soils on the Site. Building demolition can begin in summer 2018.

### **Additional Site Information:**

For additional information or questions regarding the Remacor Site, please contact the DEP Site Project Manager, Jake Moore, by phone at 814-332-6648 or email at [jacmoore@pa.gov](mailto:jacmoore@pa.gov) during regular business hours.

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