



Former Northwest Refinery: environmental response update

This fact sheet provides information about the status of the investigation and remediation activities that are ongoing at the Former Northwest Refinery site in New Brighton, Minnesota. Ashland Inc. (Ashland) is conducting this work under the oversight of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

Background

The approximately 6-acre site is owned by the city of New Brighton, which purchased it in 2006. It is adjacent to other industrial sites that are in various stages of cleanup. From 1941 until the early 1960s, Northwest Refinery and other companies leased the land and operated a refinery on the site. In 1964, the refinery was shut down and, in 1967, it was demolished. In 1970, Ashland acquired the Northwest Refinery Company and the refinery in St. Paul Park, along with various other assets. Ashland never operated the refinery on the New Brighton site.



Environmental investigations of the New Brighton refinery site began in 1986, when the MPCA issued a Request for Response Action (RFRA) to both the landowner (MT Properties, formerly MT Railway) and the operator formerly associated with the site. Ashland responded to the RFRA in 1998 and undertook a test pit investigation of soils. Following completion of the investigation, Ashland entered into a Consent Order with MPCA in 2000 for a soil-removal action. This soil-removal action was completed by Ashland under the parking lot for Long Lake Park, with nearly 2,000 cubic yards of material being removed from the site. A report on this action was submitted to MPCA in November 2000 and approved by the MPCA in September 2001.

In 2003, the city of New Brighton formulated a redevelopment plan for a 100-acre parcel, including a portion of the Former Northwest Refinery site. This redevelopment plan led to further environmental investigations to assess the land's suitability for development, with the Former Northwest Refinery site identified as requiring further cleanup. Ashland and MPCA entered into a Compliance Agreement in 2011. The Compliance Agreement provided the terms and conditions for the MPCA's Petroleum Remediation Program to oversee remediation and enforcement for petroleum releases to water and soil at the site. The other sites located on the New Brighton parcel are in various stages of investigation/remediation and are not part of the Former Northwest Refinery site.

Completed remedial activities

Soil-remediation work began at the site in November 2011 and was completed by February 2012. Approximately 66,630 tons of soils were excavated at the site, with 52,464 tons of that being transported off site for proper disposal. In May 2012, the MPCA completed a review of the soil-remediation work and determined that soil-remediation activities at the site were complete.

Based on the completion of this work and a risk assessment that was completed for the site:

- Residual impacts left at the site pose no risks for swimmers or anglers in Long Lake.
- The clean soils at surface will eliminate potential risks to recreational users through incidental contact.
- There are no risks to ecological receptors in Long Lake because no impacts have been observed in surface water or sediment at the edge of the lake.

While impacts have been observed in groundwater adjacent to Rush Lake, there is no risk to terrestrial receptors (birds and mammals) and groundwater impacts are likely to lessen before the groundwater discharges to the lake.

Site status and current activities

As described above soil-remediation activities are complete at the site. Remaining impacts are limited to groundwater.

In accordance with work plans developed by Ashland and approved by the MPCA, the following work remains to be completed at the site:

- installation of additional monitoring wells;
- assessment of groundwater and surface water conditions following soil-excitation activities; and
- further assessment of the natural biological processes that are degrading petroleum impacts in groundwater.

It is anticipated that groundwater-monitoring well installation will be completed in 2013. Consistent with the requirements of the Compliance Agreement, a two-year groundwater-monitoring program will be implemented at the site. Upon satisfactory groundwater-monitoring results, the groundwater-monitoring network will be removed.

In addition, the Former Northwest Refinery site is in the process of being delisted from the Permanent List of Priorities (PLP); the list of state Superfund sites in Minnesota. The site will be delisted from the PLP in 2013 following a public comment period.

For more information

For more information, contact [Steven M. Schoff](#), Project Leader, Site Remediation and Redevelopment Section, Remediation Division, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, at 651-757-2701 or [Jim McCann](#), Project Leader, Petroleum Remediation and Redevelopment Section, Remediation Division, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, at 651-757-2159.