

## Address emerging threats at contaminated sites

Provide resources to clean up closed sites that pose public health hazards.

### What's the issue?

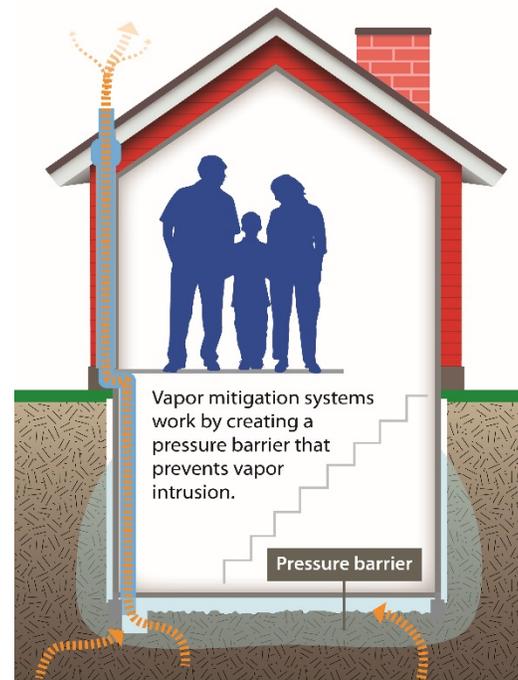
Over the past several years, new science has brought to light health threats posed by some contaminated sites and closed landfills that were previously unknown. In addition, new knowledge about the health threats of some drinking water contaminants — trichloroethylene (TCE), for example — has prompted the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to make its limits on those contaminants more stringent. These developments are forcing a reexamination of closed contaminated sites and closed landfills, where cleanup work had been done.

### Vapor intrusion

New technology has helped identify vapor intrusion, a previously unknown health threat. Groundwater that is contaminated with certain chemicals can produce chemical vapors that migrate into surrounding soil. Pockets of these soil vapors can enter homes and businesses through cracks in buildings' foundations and threaten indoor air quality. At high enough levels, the vapors can be harmful to human health. The vapors persist in the soil in and around contaminated sites for many years, even after contaminated groundwater and soils have been removed. Environmental and health regulators have only recently begun to understand vapor intrusion.

### Reassessing Superfund sites

The MPCA must go back and reassess 1,429 closed Superfund sites in Minnesota for vapor intrusion and 629 for compliance with new drinking water standards. The agency estimates that 25% of the 1,429 sites will show vapor intrusion into nearby homes and businesses. Additional Superfund staff will accelerate the review completion timeline for these sites from FY 2061 to FY 2028.

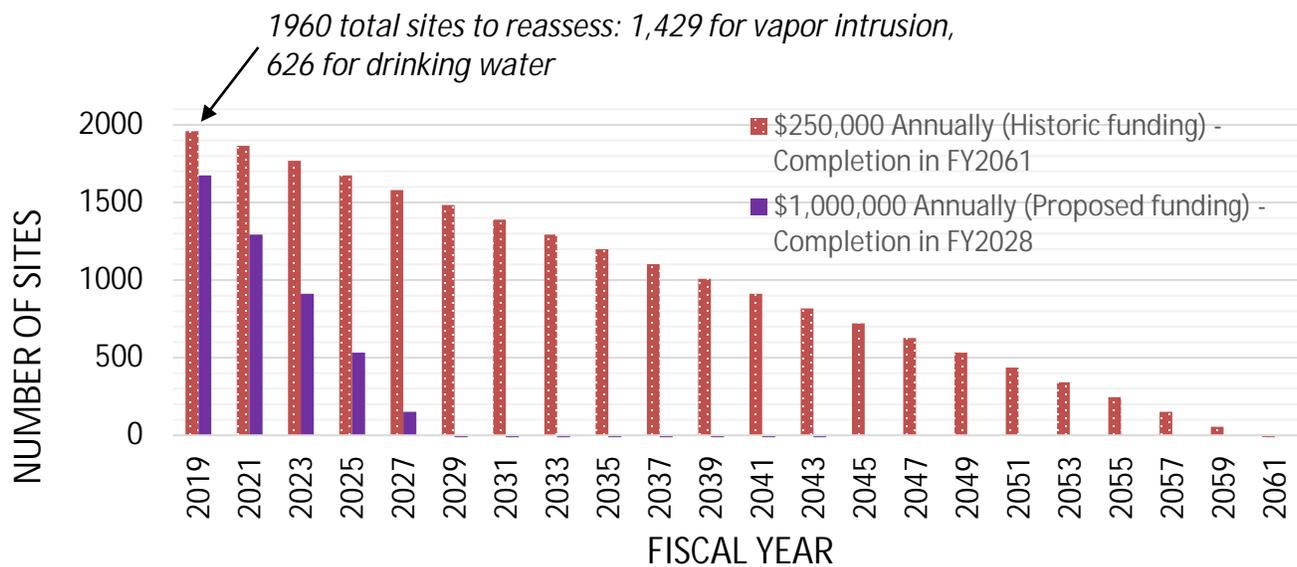


### Protecting public health

Vapor intrusion is an emotional issue. At each site, we:

- Identify homes and businesses that need to be tested
- Hold informational community meetings
- Obtain permission from owners to enter homes/buildings to test for vapor intrusion
- Arrange for installation of mitigation systems (sub-slab vacuum systems that vent vapors out at the roof) if vapor intrusion is present

## Superfund Site Review Timeline Based on Funding Level



### Assessing closed landfills

The MPCA must also investigate some closed landfills in Minnesota for vapor intrusion and to evaluate risks associated with chemicals of emerging concern (CECs), such as per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and 1,4-dioxane. The MPCA will investigate a portion of the closed landfills where CECs and vapor intrusion have been detected to quantify and address any potential risks to the environment, wildlife, and human health.

### Proposal

A \$605,000 annual appropriation ongoing from the Remediation Fund is needed for investigation and remediation work at closed Superfund sites and closed landfills statewide.

A key premise of the Superfund law is that we can recover cleanup costs from the parties responsible for the contamination. However, many of Minnesota's closed Superfund sites were closed long ago. Responsible businesses may have closed; site owners may have retired or passed away. However, the MPCA will seek reimbursement for this work from viable responsible parties and, where possible, direct them to do the work.

### Why is it important?

These closed sites across the state may pose potential risks to Minnesotans who work and live around them. In addition, many Superfund sites are located in disadvantaged communities; older industries with a legacy of contamination were often concentrated in such areas. The same is true for closed landfills. Urban and rural residents with the fewest resources are often disproportionately affected by pollution and its health risks.

### For more information

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