



Reusing Superfund Sites - Summary Overview

Why EPA Considers Reuse at Superfund sites

EPA's primary responsibility at Superfund sites is to ensure the protection of human health and the environment. Within this responsibility, EPA recognizes that identifying and understanding reasonably anticipated future land use(s) at a site is an important consideration affecting the entire site cleanup process. By working with local communities to consider future uses, formerly contaminated properties can be returned to productive uses that also help to protect site cleanup remedies.

Reuse of Superfund sites can provide many benefits. Appropriate reuse of a site can support the long-term effectiveness of a remedy by reducing the possibility that other, potentially non-protective land uses might occur. Reuse can also benefit communities by positively affecting values for land on and around a site.

Land Use in the CERCLA Cleanup Process

Considering future land use in the selection and implementation of remedies has its roots in the National Contingency Plan. In addition, the 1995 Land Use Directive recommends that EPA evaluate anticipated future land use early in a site's cleanup process to help "perform the risk assessment and select the appropriate remedy" for that site.

Remedy selection can determine the size of the area that can be returned to productive use and the particular types of uses that will be possible following site cleanup. Considering reasonably anticipated future land uses is an integral part of the remedial process because it helps to ensure the long-term integrity and protectiveness of the remedy.

Understanding a site's existing conditions and history as well as key community characteristics are important pieces of information that can impact the reuse possibilities at a site. Developing a comprehensive understanding of a site's environmental, economic, and social context ensures that reuse planning activities generate practical community opportunities for future uses at a site and allows these opportunities to be integrated into the cleanup process at a site.

Types of Reuse

Superfund sites can support many kinds of reuse, although reuse generally falls into one of six categories: green space; commercial; residential; public service; industrial; federal; and mixed use. In addition, EPA has an emerging interest in exploring opportunities to facilitate the reuse of contaminated properties and mine sites for renewable energy generation.

Tools and Resources

EPA helps communities explore reuse at Superfund sites through technical and other forms of assistance. Some of the tools and resources available for stakeholders interested in site reuse include:

Reuse Assessments: A reuse assessment involves collecting and evaluating information to develop assumptions and potential scenarios about reasonably anticipated future land use(s) at Superfund sites.

Financial and Technical Support: EPA provides resources for citizens interested in becoming involved in the Superfund cleanup process.

EPA supports **Community Advisory Groups (CAGs)**, which are groups of citizens that communicate to EPA their concerns regarding site cleanup and future use.

Iron King Mine – Humboldt Smelter Superfund Site Reuse Assessment:

A reuse assessment helps EPA develop a more accurate and complete understanding of the current and future uses that might reasonably occur at a Superfund site, which in turn inform EPA's remedial decisions. By developing reuse assumptions based on information gathered from site owners and other community stakeholders early in the Superfund process, EPA can develop cleanup alternatives consistent with the anticipated future use(s) that might occur at the Iron King Mine – Humboldt Smelter Superfund Site.

The reuse assessment will be designed to identify general reuse zones based on stakeholder input and physical features of the site and surrounding area. The reuse assessment will identify a range of compatible, sustainable, realistic, and economically viable reuse opportunities for long-term use of the site. The reuse assessment will be used to help EPA assess reasonably anticipated future uses for the properties and will inform remedy decisions for each portion of the site. The reuse assessment can facilitate site stewardship, support the long-term effectiveness of the remedy, and be used as a tool to promote redevelopment of the site after cleanup.

Some of the questions EPA will consider in the reuse assessment at the site include:

- ✦ What are the environmental conditions at the site?
- ✦ What are the owners' plans for future use of the site?
- ✦ What site factors favor or limit future use?
- ✦ Which key individuals and groups will determine reuse and what are their views?
- ✦ Are there renewable energy opportunities for the site?

Tools and Resources cont'd

EPA awards **Technical Assistance Grants (TAGs)** to community groups so they can hire technical advisors to help community members understand technical issues at a Superfund site.

Technical Reports: EPA has developed a series of documents to help communities grappling with the issues around reusing Superfund sites.

- Wind Energy at Former Mining Sites
- Recreational Reuse of Land Above Hazardous Waste Containment Areas
- Recreational Opportunities at Abandoned Mine Lands
- Commercial Use Where Waste is Left on Site



Reuse Websites:

Superfund Redevelopment Program

<http://epa.gov/superfund/programs/recycle/index.html>

EPA Abandoned Minelands Program

<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/aml/revital/index.htm>

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