

United States
Environmental Protection Agency
New England Region

Office of External Programs
JFK Federal Building
Boston, MA 02203

Connecticut Maine Massachusetts New Hampshire Rhode Island Vermont



Environmental News

Contact: Peyton Fleming, EPA Press Office (617-918-1008)

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EPA Orders Five Parties at the Centredale Manor Restoration Project to Complete Capping Activities

BOSTON - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency yesterday issued a unilateral Administrative Order to five potentially responsible parties at the Centredale Manor Restoration Project. The order requires the parties to complete a second cap at the property and to implement certain flood control measures with oversight from EPA.

“It is unfortunate that EPA has to issue a unilateral order, but these parties have declined to perform these important public health measures voluntarily,” said Mindy S. Lubber, the EPA’s New England administrator. “This order requires the private parties to step up to the plate and contribute to this complex undertaking. This cleanup should not have to rely solely on taxpayer dollars.”

The order requires the parties to submit a general work plan by early May and commence actual work by mid May.

EPA has spent approximately \$2 million to conduct widespread sampling in and along the Woonasquatucket River, to fence and limit access to contaminated areas, and to cap soil south of the Centredale Manor parking lot. The vegetated cap prevents exposure of humans and wildlife to dioxin and other contaminants, and also prevents migration of the contaminants to the Woonasquatucket River and other parts of the sensitive ecosystem at the site. Last fall, EPA’s cleanup crews completed most of a second cap between Centredale Manor and Brook Village. EPA staff continue to investigate to determine the extent of contamination in the river. A formal evaluation of options for addressing contamination further downstream is also underway.

While the agency appreciates the cooperation it has received from Brook Village and Centredale Manor as the agency has performed work on the project, the owners (along with a former operator at the site, New England Container Company Inc.) have repeatedly declined to perform work on their properties. The five parties named on the order are: Crown Metro, Inc.; Emhart Industries, Inc.; New England Container Company Inc.; Brook Village Associates Limited Partnership; and Centredale Manor Associates Limited Partnership.

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The Centredale Manor Restoration Project is located on Smith Street in North Providence and includes the Woonasquatucket River and the floodplain between Route 44 downstream to and including Lymansville Dam.