
Urgent Cleanup Starting At Former Metal Casting Facility

Waunakee Alloy Site
Waunakee, Wisconsin

July 2015

For more information

For questions, comments or more information about the cleanup, contact these EPA team members:

For technical questions:

Andrew Maguire
On-scene Coordinator
Superfund Division
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
312-353-8782
maguire.andrew@epa.gov

For general questions:

Teresa Jones
Community Involvement
Coordinator
Superfund Division
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604
312-886-0725
jones.teresa@epa.gov

You may call EPA toll-free at
800-621-8431, weekdays,
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Website:

<http://www.epa.gov/region5/cleanup/waunakee-alloy/>



Investigators found hazardous substances at this abandoned metal castings facility.

Beginning in mid-July, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will begin an urgent cleanup to remove mercury, PCBs and other flammable and corrosive materials from the abandoned Waunakee Alloy Casting Corp. at 201 N. Madison St. EPA estimates the cleanup at the former metal casting plant could cost almost \$1 million.

This project is what EPA calls a “time-critical removal action,” the technical term for a cleanup of contamination that poses an imminent threat to the health and safety of nearby residents and the environment. EPA is conducting the removal under the emergency authority provided in federal law.¹ The cleanup is expected to last up to a month.

What are the threats?

In 2007, a land developer hired a contractor to take soil samples from the facility and residential properties. The samples showed PCB concentrations that exceed EPA’s standards.

In 2014, another site inspection conducted for the village of Waunakee found oil leaking from electrical capacitors containing high concentrations of PCBs mixed with mercury. The capacitors were placed in steel drums and visible liquid mercury was placed in plastic drums for containment.

¹EPA conducts time-critical cleanups in accordance with Section 104(a) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. §9604(a); and 40 C.F.R. §300.415 of the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP).



Floor staining in foundry from compressor fluid.

The release areas were covered with plastic sheeting secured with sandbags. However, the capacitors and hazardous waste have not been removed from the site because it is difficult to remove mixed hazardous waste.

The site was referred to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in January. WDNR requested assistance from the EPA in March.

What is known about the site?

Waunakee Alloy Casting Corp. operated as a metal casting facility, or foundry, in the village of Waunakee from 1953 until 2009. The Waunakee Alloy site is a vacant 4.5-acre lot along North Madison Street just outside of downtown Waunakee. The lot is bordered to the north, east and west by residential neighborhoods and to the south by a children's playground.

EPA site inspection

EPA assessed the site in March and found that:

- Buildings containing hazardous substances were in various stages of decay with several broken windows allowing access to trespassers and wildlife.
- Residential properties near the site lacked security, and some had unsecured hazardous substances.
- Deteriorating drums and containers had been stored near flammable materials and abandoned for years.

- There was a threat of fire or explosion.
- People could come into contact with hazardous substances by touching or inhaling them, or by accidentally consuming them.

EPA determined the site poses an immediate hazard because of the numerous abandoned hazardous chemicals close to a residential area with easy public access.

Cleanup plan

Actual cleanup work and investigation will take several weeks or longer, and will include:

- Developing and implementing a site health, safety and security plan for the benefit of workers and nearby residents.
- Establishing site security.
- Determining the nature and extent of contamination.
- Developing and implementing a plan to segregate and remove containers, waste and contaminated soil.
- Arranging for off-site disposal of hazardous substances.

EPA will continue to assess the site and may propose future cleanups after the latest work is complete.



Products found in one of the buildings at the abandoned facility.