

# EPA Announces Plans to Use First \$1B from Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funds to Clear Out the Superfund Backlog

New York Communities will Benefit

December 17, 2021

## Contact Information

Stephen McBay ([mcbay.stephen@epa.gov](mailto:mcbay.stephen@epa.gov))

(212)-637-3672

**NEW YORK** – Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a \$1 billion investment from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to initiate cleanup and clear the backlog of 49 previously unfunded Superfund sites and accelerate cleanup at dozens of other sites across the country. Until this historic investment, many of these were part of a backlog of hazardous waste sites awaiting funding. Thousands of contaminated sites exist nationally due to hazardous waste being dumped, left out in the open, or otherwise improperly managed. These sites include manufacturing facilities, processing plants, landfills and mining sites.

“This work is just the beginning; with more than 1 in 4 Black and Hispanic Americans living within 3 miles of a Superfund site, EPA is working to serve people that have been left behind,” **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan.** “Approximately 60 percent of the sites to receive funding for new cleanup projects are in historically underserved communities. Communities living near many of the most serious uncontrolled or abandoned releases of contamination will finally get the protections they deserve.”

The \$1 billion investment is the first wave of funding from the \$3.5 billion in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to help cleanup polluted Superfund sites in communities. The [backlog of previously unfunded sites that will now be receiving funding](#) are in 24 states and territories and all 10 EPA regions, including some communities who have been waiting for cleanup for more than four years.

EPA is committed to carrying out this work in line with President Biden’s [Justice40](#) Initiative by advancing environmental justice and incorporating equity considerations into all aspects of the Superfund cleanup process. This will help ensure that historic and ongoing impacts of contamination on overburdened communities are fully considered and addressed.

**New York Governor Kathy Hochul said**, “Across the state, we are putting former industrial sites back into productive use, revitalizing our communities and protecting our environment. Today’s announcement will help to jumpstart long-awaited cleanups in Lockport, Vestal, and Elmira—communities eager for the economic opportunities sparked by Superfund cleanups and the chance to look beyond the industrial pollution of the past to a cleaner and greener future. With strong partners at U.S. EPA and complemented by New York’s State Superfund and Brownfield Cleanup Programs, we are supporting the rebirth of these sites to benefit all of our communities.”

“I’m thrilled to announce that key Superfund sites located in Elmira, the town of Vestal, and Niagara County are receiving the funds needed to clean up hazardous waste in these communities. This critical funding is a direct result of the bipartisan infrastructure package and will help clean up these sites in order to keep the surrounding communities safe from exposure to harmful, toxic waste,” **said Senator Gillibrand**. “The health of New Yorkers should not be put at risk due to toxic waste dumps – period. I fought alongside Senator Schumer to secure and deliver this funding, and I am grateful to the Biden administration for quickly disbursing this money.”

“We are excited to see that the investments made by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill are already having a positive impact on our area. We care about the environmental health of our communities, and that is why the announcement of additional cleanup at the Facet Enterprises location is such welcomed news. Projects like this are why we are proud to have supported the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill and all it does for our community,” **said Congressman Tom Reed**.

“With today’s announcement, help is on the way to communities across the country plagued by the risks of living near a Superfund site. Nowhere is that more true than in my home state of New Jersey, which has the greatest number of Superfund sites in the country,” **said Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr.** “I’m thrilled the bipartisan infrastructure law is being put to immediate use to clean up backlogged sites and give our communities the peace of mind they deserve. Thanks to its partial reinstatement of the Superfund Polluter Pays tax, cleanup sites will have more dedicated funding moving forward, and with the Build Back Better Act’s full reinstatement, unfunded sites could become a thing of the past.”

Administrator Regan visited the Lower Darby Creek Area site in Pennsylvania, one of the many sites with ongoing work that will receive a boost from the historic Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding. Along with new construction projects, infrastructure funds will be used to accelerate ongoing work and begin cleanup at additional Superfund sites in various stages of pre-construction and planning throughout the country.

These Superfund cleanup projects will make a visible and lasting difference in communities. In one Florida community, residents have been advocating for removal of creosote-contaminated soil in their neighborhood for years. At a New York site, lead contaminated soil will be removed from people's backyards. At a site in New Mexico, EPA will address the source area of a contaminated groundwater plume migrating towards a community.

The funds will supercharge the Superfund program to address the toll contaminated sites have on communities. EPA is finalizing cleanup plans and preparing funding mechanisms to get construction work started as soon as possible. More information about funding for backlogged sites and accelerated cleanup sites will be available in the coming weeks.

In 1980, the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, known as Superfund, was passed. The novel law gave EPA the authority and funds to hold polluters accountable for cleaning up the most contaminated sites across the country. When no viable responsible party is found or cannot afford the cleanup, funds appropriated by Congress are used. A tax on chemical and petroleum industries provided funds to the Superfund Trust fund for Superfund cleanups up until 1995. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law reinstates the chemical excise taxes and invests an additional \$3.5 billion in environmental remediation at Superfund sites, making it one of the largest investments in American history to address the legacy pollution that harms the public health of communities and neighborhoods.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is a once-in-a-generation investment that will create millions of jobs modernizing our infrastructure, turn the climate crisis into an opportunity, and put us on a path to win the economic competition for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In **New York**, the following Superfund Sites are slated to receive **Bipartisan Infrastructure Law** funding:

At the **Eighteen Mile Creek Superfund Site in Lockport**, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill funds will be used to excavate and dispose of lead and PCB contaminated sediment within the Creek Corridor. The cleanup will include excavation and disposal of soil at the adjacent upland commercial properties as well. Infrastructure funds will also be used to excavate lead contaminated soil at certain residential properties on Mill Street and several other adjacent streets at the site.

“Lockport is thankful that the 18-Mile Creek Superfund site is part of the bi-partisan infrastructure bill,” **said Mayor Michelle M. Roman, Lockport, NY**. “This will make a difference for our community impacted by the years of hazardous waste they have endured. Cleanup will allow us to protect human life, the environment and promote economic, recreational and habitat improvements.”

At the **Facet Enterprises, Inc. Superfund site in the Village of Elmira Heights**, the infrastructure funds will be used to install vapor mitigation systems where vapor intrusion of volatile organic compounds, specifically trichloroethylene (TCE), is occurring or may have the potential to occur. This method removes harmful chemicals from the soil in the form of vapor by applying a vacuum.

At the **Vestal Water Supply Well 1-1 Superfund Site in Vestal**, the Bipartisan infrastructure Bill funds will be used for thermal soil treatment of VOC-contaminated soils. In addition, some of the soil is contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which will be excavated and removed from the site.

For more information and to see a list of the 49 sites to receive funding for new cleanup projects, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-sites-new-construction-projects-receive-bipartisan-infrastructure-law-funding>

For more information about EPA's Superfund program, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund>

Follow EPA Region 2 on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/eparegion2> **EXITEXIT EPA WEBSITE** and visit our Facebook page, <http://facebook.com/eparegion2> **EXITEXIT EPA WEBSITE**

21-090

Copied from- <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-announces-plans-use-first-1b-bipartisan-infrastructure-law-funds-clear-out-0>