



Chicago North, Illinois, Site

A FUSRAP site

This fact sheet provides information about the **Chicago North site**. Long-term stewardship responsibilities for this site are managed by the **U.S. Department of Energy Office of Legacy Management** under the **Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program**.

Site Information and History

The Chicago North, Illinois, Site (formerly the National Guard Armory) is located at East 52nd Street and Cottage Grove Avenue in Chicago, approximately 6 miles south of the downtown business district. The 290,000-square-foot concrete and stone facility consists of an arena with bleachers at the center of the building, and classrooms, offices, storage areas, and garages at the north and south ends.

In 1942, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Manhattan Engineer District (MED) leased the National Guard Armory to store and process uranium metal. The MED also used the armory as the main procurement and shipping location for its metallurgical laboratory. Although not verified by historical records, the armory storeroom was believed to have been used to store uranium shavings and grinding wastes. One of several uranium fires was reported to have occurred in the northeast corner of the armory storeroom. A second fire also contaminated both the receiving area and the storeroom.

The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), which succeeded the MED, terminated the use of the armory in 1951 and returned the site to the state of Illinois. MED disposed of contaminated soil removed from the arena. According to interviews with personnel, an effort was made to decontaminate some arena bleachers as well. No records could be found to indicate where the contaminated material was taken or whether radiological surveys or decontamination was conducted. Because of these uncertainties, the Energy Research and Development Agency, the predecessor to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), conducted a comprehensive

radiological survey to determine whether any contamination remained at the site.

Results of the survey, which was performed from September 1977 to October 1978, indicated that residual contamination exceeded guidelines in effect at that time and that uranium was the primary contaminant of concern. Based on these results, DOE designated the Chicago North site for remedial action under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) in 1985. Additional radiological surveys were performed January-February 1987.

Remediation activities took place between April and June 1987 and included: (1) vacuuming or wiping surface areas; (2) sanding, grinding, or scrubbing the areas, when necessary; (3) shoveling out sludge in six catch basins, high-pressure water cleaning of pipes from each catch basin; (4) sandblasting walls; and (5) removing contaminated soil from the area outside the armory building and from the area between catch basins where a main pipe was removed.

Regulatory Setting

AEC, the predecessor agency to DOE, established FUSRAP in March 1974 to evaluate radioactive contamination at sites used in the development of the nation's nuclear weapons and atomic energy programs. DOE has the legislative authority under the Atomic Energy Act (AEA) of 1954, as amended, to perform radiological surveys, monitoring, and maintenance at sites used to support the nuclear activities of DOE's predecessor agencies. DOE also has legislative authority under the AEA to remediate FUSRAP sites identified as requiring some form of response action. In 1997, Congress transferred responsibility for FUSRAP site characterization and remediation from DOE to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The DOE Office of Legacy Management (LM) retains responsibility for long-term care of remediated FUSRAP sites. For more information about the program, please see the [FUSRAP fact sheet](#).

The Chicago North site was remediated to criteria in *Guidelines for Residual Radioactive Material at Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program and Remote Surplus Facilities Management Program Sites*. A notice of cleanup certification for the site was published in the *Federal Register* on February 17, 1989.

In fiscal year 2004, DOE transferred long-term stewardship responsibilities for the Chicago North FUSRAP site from the DOE Office of Environmental Management to LM.

Current Site Conditions

Post-remedial action survey data indicate that the radiological condition of the Chicago North site is in compliance with applicable DOE standards and guidelines for cleanup of residual radioactive contamination. An independent verification survey conducted after the completion of remedial action detected no residual radioactivity at the site that exceeded current guidelines. Therefore, DOE released the site for unrestricted use in 1989.

Legacy Management Activities

No monitoring, maintenance, or site inspections are required for the Chicago North site. LM's responsibilities consist of managing site records and responding to stakeholder inquiries.



CONTACT INFORMATION

**IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY AT THE SITE,
CONTACT 911**

**LM TOLL-FREE EMERGENCY HOTLINE:
(877) 695-5322**

Site-specific documents related to the Chicago North, Illinois, Site are available on the LM website at www.energy.gov/lm/chicago-north-illinois-site

For more information on FUSRAP site history or current long-term stewardship activities, contact:

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