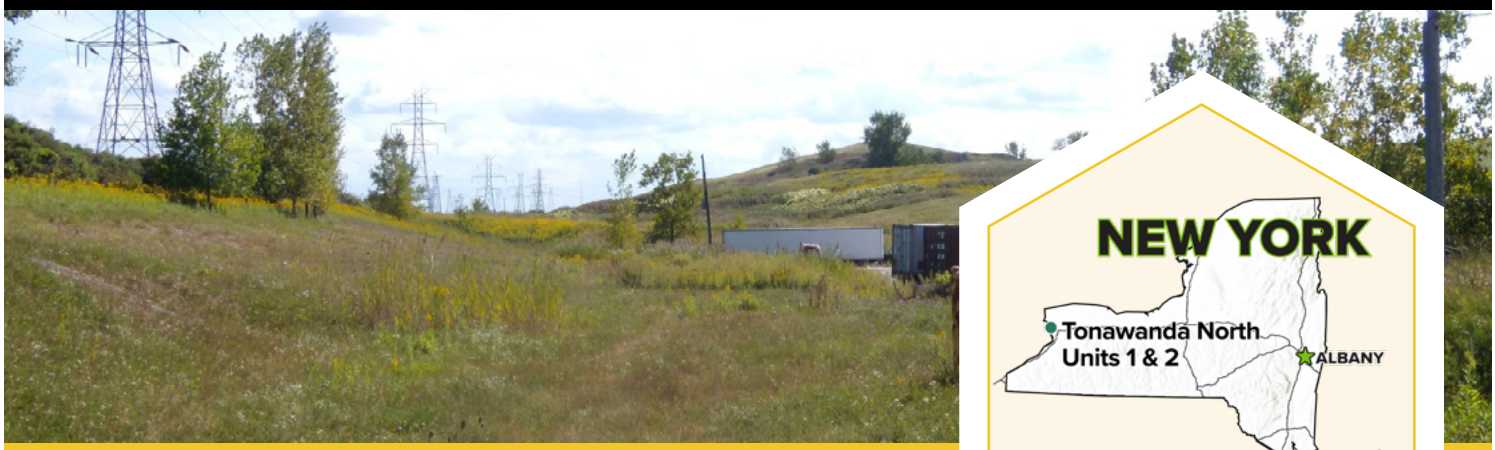
Fact Sheet

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY | Legacy Management



Tonawanda North, New York, Sites, Units 1 and 2

A FUSRAP site

This fact sheet provides information about the **Tonawanda North sites**. 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 Tonawanda North, New York, Sites, Units 1 and 2, formerly called the Ashland Oil #1 and #2 sites, are located in Tonawanda, New York, a suburb of Buffalo. The Tonawanda North sites comprise three areas: Unit 1 (Ashland Oil #1, which includes Seaway Area D), Unit 2 (Ashland Oil #2 and Rattlesnake Creek), and Unit 3 (Seaway Area C). Only Units 1 and 2 have been closed and transferred to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Legacy Management (LM) for long-term surveillance and maintenance.

As part of the nation's early atomic energy program, the former Linde Air Products Division of Union Carbide Corporation processed uranium ore at its facility in Tonawanda. This work was conducted under contract with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Manhattan Engineer District (MED) from 1942 to 1946.

From 1944 to 1946, about 8,000 tons of waste from processing low-grade uranium ore were transported from Linde to a 10-acre area known then as the Haist property, now called Tonawanda North, Unit 1. In 1960, the property was transferred to the Ashland Oil Company for use in the company's oil refinery activities.

The Ashland Oil Company used a portion of what is now Tonawanda North, Unit 1 as a landfill for disposal of general plant refuse and industrial and chemical byproducts. In 1974, the Ashland Oil Company constructed a drainage ditch and a bermed area for two petroleum product storage tanks on Tonawanda North, Unit 1. Soil removed during construction contained radioactive residues, and the Ashland Oil Company transported the contaminated materials to the Seaway Landfill and Ashland Oil #2 sites for disposal. In 1982, Ashland Oil closed the industrial landfill and covered it with clay and soil; the property became covered with grass and shrubs over time.

The primary radioactive materials at the Ashland Oil #1 and #2 sites were uranium-238, radium-226, thorium-230, and their decay products. Some chemical residues from MED activities were also present. DOE determined the site was eligible for cleanup under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) in 1984. A Record of Decision (ROD) for the Ashland Oil #1, Seaway Area D, and Ashland Oil #2 sites was signed on April 20, 1998. Cleanup at the Ashland Oil #2 site was completed in 1999. More than 52,000 tons of material was excavated and shipped off-site for disposal. Cleanup at the Ashland Oil #1 site was completed in 2003; 173,000 tons of material was excavated and shipped off site for disposal.

Results of sampling conducted by USACE during cleanup of the Ashland Oil #2 site indicated that historical activities had contaminated portions of nearby Rattlesnake Creek, and additional cleanup would be necessary. An Explanation of Significant Differences was issued in 2004 to include Rattlesnake Creek in the Ashland ROD. Remediation of Rattlesnake Creek began in May 2005 and was completed in September 2005. More than 33,000 tons of material was excavated and shipped off-site for disposal. The cleanup of Rattlesnake Creek completed the remediation of all areas included in the 1998 ROD. USACE officially observed the completion of the work at the sites on September 14, 2006. USACE is currently conducting remedial actions at the adjacent Seaway Industrial Park site, which will be transferred to LM as the Tonawanda North, Unit 3, New York, Site following completion of remedial action. Transfer is scheduled to occur in 2028.

Regulatory Setting

The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, 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 had 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 USACE, and since 1997, response actions at FUSRAP sites have been conducted in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, as amended, and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan. LM retains responsibility for long-term stewardship of remediated FUSRAP sites. For more information about the program, please see the FUSRAP fact sheet.

USACE remediated the contaminated areas to the standards specified in the ROD for the Ashland Oil #1 (including Seaway Area D) and Ashland Oil #2 sites and the Explanation of Significant Differences for the Rattlesnake Creek portion of the Ashland sites for all pathways of exposure. No further response is needed to protect human health and the environment, and the sites are suitable for unrestricted (urban residential) use.

USACE transferred long-term stewardship responsibility for the Tonawanda North FUSRAP sites to LM in 2008.

Current Site Conditions

The projected future use of the sites is commercial or industrial operations. The Waterfront Land Use Plan was issued in March 2014. The plan proposes a single mixed-use zoning district in the area containing Units 1 and 2.

Legacy Management Activities

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

Areas Remediated Under FUSRAP (from USACE).

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 **Tonawanda North, New York, Sites, Units 1 and 2** are available on the LM website at **www.energy.gov/lm/tonawanda-north-new-york-site-unit-1** and **www.energy.gov/lm/tonawanda-north-new-york-site-unit-2**

For more information on FUSRAP site history or current long-term stewardship activities, contact:
U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Legacy Management
2597 Legacy Way
Grand Junction, CO 81503

Email:
FUSRAPinfo@lm.doe.gov
public.affairs@lm.doe.gov

DOE Office of Legacy Management
(970) 248-6070

www.energy.gov/lm

www.facebook.com/OfficeofLegacyManagement

www.linkedin.com/showcase/office-of-legacy-management

07/2023