



## Colonie, New York, Site

A FUSRAP site

This fact sheet provides information about the **Colonie 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

The Colonie site is an 11.2-acre, vacant property located at 1130 Central Avenue (New York State Route 5) in the town of Colonie, Albany County, New York. Colonie is a suburb of the city of Albany. The industrial site was previously owned and operated by National Lead Industries (NL) from 1937 to 1984, and is currently owned by the federal government. In 1958, NL began producing items manufactured from uranium and thorium, under licenses issued by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and the state of New York. These activities resulted in residual radiological contamination co-located with metals in soil on portions of the site, as well as impacts to site groundwater and to neighboring privately owned properties (known as the vicinity properties). All buildings and contaminated soils were removed.

### Site History

Industrial operations at the site began in 1923, when a facility was built for manufacturing wood products and toys. In 1927, the facility was converted to a brass foundry for manufacturing railroad components. In 1937, NL purchased the facility for conducting electroplating operations. NL also bought an adjacent lot that contained a portion of Patroon Lake. In 1958, NL began producing items manufactured from uranium and thorium, under licenses issued by the AEC and the state of New York. The AEC contract was terminated in 1968, and work at the plant afterwards was devoted to fabricating shielding components, aircraft counterweights, and artillery projectiles from depleted uranium.

Depleted uranium released from the plant exhaust stacks spread to site buildings, portions of the grounds, and 56 commercial and residential vicinity properties. NL also disposed of contaminated casting sand in the former Patroon Lake. The historical industrial operations at the Colonie site resulted in contaminated soil, groundwater, dust, and structures at the site and its vicinity.

The New York State Supreme Court shut down the NL plant in 1984 due to airborne uranium releases. The U.S. Congress assigned the authority to clean up the site to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), which acquired the site for the purpose of cleanup.

DOE managed the site and cleanup under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) from 1984 to 1997. During this period, DOE investigated the vicinity properties, on-site structures, groundwater, and surface and subsurface soils; developed a plan to remove radiologically impacted soils; cleaned up 53 of 56 vicinity properties; removed the on-site buildings; and stored the waste materials generated during these actions.

In 1997, Congress transferred cleanup actions under FUSRAP to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). In 2007, USACE completed the large-scale soil removal action at the main site and the three remaining vicinity properties by excavating and disposing of 135,000 cubic yards of soil contaminated with radionuclides, metals, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) off-site and then backfilling with clean soil. In 2010, USACE initiated a groundwater monitoring program to measure the progress of monitored natural attenuation for VOCs with concentrations above protective levels. Between 2011 and 2014, USACE investigated depleted uranium dust contamination in vicinity properties, including homes and commercial entities.

The cleanup at the Colonie site and vicinity properties was completed in accordance with records of decision (RODs) for the three site operable units (OUs). The Groundwater OU (April 2010), Main Site Soils OU (March 2015), and the Vicinity Property OU (September 2017) are in compliance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), as amended, and the National



*Colonie NL Industries plant, 1983.*

Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan. The Colonie Site Closeout Report documenting the completion of the remedial actions was finalized in February 2018.

All radioactive materials that were at levels above the cleanup requirements, as defined by the RODs, have been cleaned up on federal property, on vicinity properties, and in the groundwater. No further action is required to address soil contamination. However, metals contamination remains in subsurface soils in three specific inaccessible areas near utility infrastructure (indicated in the figure on page 3). These areas are managed by institutional controls administered by a New York state-issued environmental easement that imposes appropriate restrictions to prohibit excavating these soils without supervision. The response action for groundwater at the Colonie site is also complete with monitored natural attenuation, in place since 2010. Long-term groundwater monitoring will continue until target cleanup goals are achieved for the single remaining VOC (perchloroethene), which is in two wells on-site.

## 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 regulatory authority,

under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (AEA), as amended, to perform radiological investigations at sites used to support the nuclear activities of DOE predecessor agencies.

In 1997, Congress transferred responsibility for FUSRAP investigation and remediation from DOE to USACE. Since then, response actions at FUSRAP sites have been conducted in accordance with CERCLA, as amended, and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan. DOE Office of Legacy Management (LM) retains responsibility for long-term stewardship of remediated FUSRAP sites. For more information about the program, please see the [FUSRAP Fact Sheet](#).

USACE transferred the site to LM on September 30, 2019, for long-term stewardship responsibility.



*Colonie, New York, Site, 2018.*

## Current Site Conditions

The USACE cleanup resulted in a site that is suitable for either commercial or restricted residential use. There are three discrete soil areas subject to environmental easement restrictions. Excavation in these areas will require prior notifications and compliance with the environmental easement. The easement prohibits the use of groundwater and requires a prior evaluation of soil vapor intrusion for building construction. LM will conduct annual inspections of the environmental easement areas. An easement for a town-owned storm drain restricts building over the drain without town approval.

LM long-term stewardship responsibilities consist of monitoring groundwater until natural attenuation brings contaminant levels to cleanup standards, managing site

records, conducting long-term periodic reviews, and responding to stakeholder inquiries.

DOE has determined that the site be made available for future redevelopment to benefit the community. LM intends to pursue transferring or selling the property to another government agency, local authority, community organization, or private party at the earliest opportunity.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

### IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY AT THE SITE, CONTACT 911.

Site-specific documents related to the **Colonie, New York, Site** are available on the LM website at [www.energy.gov/lm/colonie-new-york-site](http://www.energy.gov/lm/colonie-new-york-site)

For more information on **FUSRAP** site history or current long-term stewardship activities, contact:  
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Colonie, New York, FUSRAP site boundary and environmental easements