

Redeveloped Site of Former Paper Plant Signals Paterson's Rebirth

- Former Paperboard Specialties Property (Paterson, New Jersey)
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It took a lot more than scissors to beat paper and rock at the abandoned and contaminated 2.5-acre former Paperboard Specialties site located across from the Passaic River in Paterson, New Jersey. But today, the site is a superb example of the rebirth underway in the city—thanks in large part to successful public/private partnerships and creative solutions by Excel Environmental Resources, Inc. (EXCEL) of North Brunswick, New Jersey. EXCEL completed the environmental investigation and conducted the site's building demolition and extensive soil and groundwater remedial action.

The approximately 2.5-acre abandoned property had been used from the 1940s to the early 1990s for the manufacturing of various paper products. Soil and groundwater at the site had been contaminated by No. 6 fuel oil discharges from underground storage tanks located beneath the building foundation, and there were additional contamination issues related to the quality of fill used to develop the property.

Paterson designated the property in need of redevelopment and supported the cleanup utilizing Housing and Urban Development and New Jersey Department of Community Affairs grant funds that covered all of the building demolition, including asbestos abatement, and all but 20 percent of the cleanup costs. The balance of the cleanup costs were ultimately covered by a local redeveloper who acquired the property once the remedial action was complete and approved by NJDEP.



← **BEFORE**

AFTER



Before soil and groundwater remediation could begin, demolition of the large and dilapidated building—including removal of asbestos-containing materials by a licensed asbestos

abatement contractor—was necessary. Then, working under an NJDEP-approved Remedial Action Work Plan, EXCEL proceeded aggressively with excavation and closure of the tanks, removal of oil-saturated soil at and below the water table, and recovery of free phase No. 6 fuel oil and groundwater from the open excavations.

To reduce cleanup costs and increase the overall effectiveness of the remediation, groundwater was treated onsite and re-injected into an injection trench to help flush residual oil into the excavation. Approximately 8,000 tons of oil-impacted soil was excavated for offsite disposal and tens of thousands of gallons of groundwater and oil were removed resulting in complete restoration of groundwater quality at the site.

Following completion of the cleanup, Paterson vacated a portion of an adjacent lot, resulting in an approximately 3-acre site ready for commercial redevelopment. The NJDEP expedited review of the final remedial action report and approved the city proceeding with sale of the property to a local redeveloper who assumed responsibility for completing the cleanup by using the various components of a 40,000-square foot retail strip mall redevelopment (i.e. building slabs, asphalt pavement, concrete, clean soil and landscaping, etc.) as an engineered cap over the historic fill that remains at the site.

The retail redevelopment construction for productive reuse of this former Brownfield property is scheduled to begin in the spring 2008. This Brownfield success story reflects a relentless commitment on the part of the City of Paterson, the NJDEP, and EXCEL to the concept of public-private partnerships, creative solutions to extremely complex technical and funding challenges, and aggressive schedule and budget.