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Underground Storage Tanks And Brownfields Sites

USTfields Pilots

EPA's USTfields Initiative will fund pilots in Brownfields communities to assess and clean up petroleum contamination from federally-regulated underground storage tanks (USTs) at idle or abandoned commercial properties. Petroleum contamination is generally excluded from coverage under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and is not, therefore, covered under EPA's Brownfields Program. In its USTfields Pilot Program, EPA's Office of Underground Storage Tanks (OUST) has selected 10 state/local pilots in which the state will partner with a local area to assess and/or clean up two or more petroleum-impacted underground storage tank sites. Each pilot state will receive up to $100,000 of LUST Trust funds to be used to assess and clean up the local area sites. This will help to ready them for future reuse.

Region 1: New Hampshire/Nashua

New Hampshire is taking steps to decrease the environmental impacts that have been created by abandoned gasoline stations and petroleum sites across its predominantly rural landscape. The state will be working closely with the City of Nashua, which has found gasoline at its Brownfields site. However, petroleum products generally cannot be cleaned up through the Brownfields program, and this has been an obstacle to cleanup efforts. Nashua is a recipient of a Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot.

Region 2: New Jersey/Trenton

The State of New Jersey will work with the City of Trenton as its partnering local area. The city is a Brownfields Assessment and Showcase Community and is receiving over $2 million in federal resources to undertake a citywide cleanup of its brownfields sites. As part of the city's cleanup plans, the city identified several sites with underground storage tanks and actual or potential petroleum contamination. Using pilot funds, the state will work with the local government to assess sites and clean up petroleum contamination, including MTBE contamination. Some of the future uses of cleaned up sites being considered include a new firehouse and a greenway along the Assunpink Creek.

Region 3: Delaware/Wilmington

Delaware has identified several potential petroleum-impacted sites in the City of Wilmington to be assessed and cleaned up. The state has discovered abandoned underground storage tank sites through community improvement projects, and the state will work with the city to use USTfields pilot funding to address these sites. The sites pose an environmental hurdle to the progress of the improvement projects and are a potential risk to the health of surrounding neighborhoods. Delaware wants to assess and clean up the abandoned underground storage tank sites to help the city protect the environment and to return these sites to productive use for the community. Wilmington is a recipient of a Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot.

Region 4: South Carolina/Anderson

South Carolina will use pilot funds to clean up properties in the City of Anderson. The City is restoring its Main Street district, including renovating several historic buildings and professional offices. This area also includes at least six former gasoline stations that qualify as USTfields. These sites are in various states of disrepair, and city officials have reported obstacles associated with the underground storage tank sites that significantly impair the completion of the revitalization project. The city is a recipient of a Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot and a Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund grant.

Region 5: Illinois/Chicago

Illinois will work with the City of Chicago, through the city's Abandoned Service Station Management Program, to assess and clean up five abandoned gas stations that are considered a threat to public health and safety and a public nuisance. The locally-funded Abandoned Service Station Management Program was established in 1996 to address the hundreds of abandoned and former service stations in the city. Since then, the program has cleaned up and secured more than 25 sites, though many more sites remain. The City of Chicago is a Brownfields Assessment and Showcase Community as well as a recipient of a Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund grant.

Region 6: New Mexico/Albuquerque

New Mexico has targeted two sites for assessment and cleanup in the City of Albuquerque that would most benefit from this program. The sites contain underground storage tanks which may be releasing petroleum products. The New Mexico Department of Environment has deemed these sites to be public nuisances and potential threats to public health and safety and the environment. The city is a recipient of a Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot and a Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund grant.

Region 7: Missouri/Kansas City

Using pilot funds, Missouri will work with Kansas City to assess prospective sites for petroleum contamination, including MTBE contamination, and clean them up. The city is hampered by the environmental impacts of numerous abandoned gasoline stations in its efforts to rehabilitate blighted properties and revitalize neighborhoods. The city created the Beacon Hill Neighborhood Redevelopment Project to begin to address some underground storage tank sites. As part of the USTfields Pilot, the state will help the city continue its efforts to assess and clean up abandoned gasoline stations that pose an environmental challenge to redevelopment. Greater Kansas City is a Brownfields Assessment and Showcase Community.

Region 8: Utah/Salt Lake City

The state is targeting Salt Lake City, which has been successful as a Brownfields Assessment and Showcase Community, for USTfields work. Economic forces have moved the sale of gasoline out of local neighborhoods and into more urban retail outlets. This trend has left many abandoned gas stations and their associated health and environmental risks located in or on the edge of low income neighborhoods. Overgrown weeds and graffiti cover abandoned gas stations that are often on highly visible corner lots and have a negative impact on surrounding neighborhoods. Local governments are interested in assessing and cleaning up such properties and returning them to productive use for the community.

Region 9: California/Oakland

California will choose underground storage tank sites in the City of Oakland to benefit from USTfields funding. Oakland is a recipient of a Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot and a Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund grant. The potential sites are among the many idle or abandoned petroleum-impacted brownfields sites where cleanup cannot be funded through the Brownfields program. In response to this problem, EPA, in partnership with the City of Oakland and the State of California, previously created the Oakland Urban Land Redevelopment (URL) program in an effort to facilitate the assessment and cleanup of petroleum-impacted underground storage tank sites. This pilot will help further that effort.

Region 10: Oregon/Portland

Oregon has targeted the City of Portland to partner with in its pilot. Portland is Oregon's oldest and largest industrial, shipping, and commercial center and has the state's highest concentration of brownfields. Because of the numerous brownfields, the city was named a Brownfields Assessment Pilot, a Brownfields Showcase Pilot, and a Revolving Loan Fund Pilot. Brownfields funds will help the city clean up and redevelop several properties in Portland. The progress of the city's redevelopment efforts, however, has been stalled by properties with underground storage tanks and/or petroleum contamination which generally cannot be addressed because of the CERCLA exclusion.

EPA and the states have not yet negotiated the Cooperative Agreements to fund these pilots; therefore, activities are subject to change.