



EPA/HUD Brownfields Research Project

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA's Brownfields Initiative strategies include funding pilot programs and other research efforts, clarifying liability issues, entering into partnerships, conducting outreach activities, developing job training programs, and addressing environmental justice concerns.

OVERVIEW

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) have joined forces in an effort to better understand the impact that environmental hazards and the environmental regulatory process may have on urban redevelopment. Both EPA and HUD recognize that to facilitate the assessment, cleanup, reuse, and redevelopment of brownfields, legal, financial, and regulatory impediments and opportunities must be considered.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the EPA/HUD Brownfields Research Project is to obtain information on the factors that impact urban investment and redevelopment decisions. The project is examining the extent and ways in which environmental hazards and the environmental regulatory process affect urban redevelopment efforts. The study is also examining the role of institutional and organizational structures, in both the private and public sectors, in determining how risks affect environmentally-sensitive investment decisions.

ACTIVITIES

Twelve urban areas were selected for study. These areas vary in size and location, prevalent industry, type of contamination/environmental problems, and applicable State and local environmental laws and

regulations. Comparisons will be made between the development of brownfields and "clean" sites. Researchers will also explore brownfields areas that were not developed.

The project will include an extensive data gathering effort. After specific urban areas have been identified, interviews will be conducted with developers, businesses leaders, lenders and other investors, and other key parties in the redevelopment process. The interviews will focus on the extent to which environmental concerns influence location and investment decisions.

HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research has provided \$275,000 in funding, and EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response has provided \$125,000. The research is being performed by individuals affiliated with The Urban Institute, the University of Louisville, and the Northeast/Midwest Institute. The research project, which began in Fall of 1995, is near completion.

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