



# Project XL: City of Fort Worth, Texas



## WHAT IS PROJECT XL?



Project XL, which stands for "eXcellence and Leadership," is a national initiative that tests innovative ways of achieving better and more cost-effective public health and environmental protection. The information and lessons learned from Project XL are being used to assist the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in redesigning its current regulatory and policy-setting approaches. Project XL encourages testing of cleaner, cheaper, and smarter ways to attain environmental results superior to those achieved under current regulations and policies, in conjunction with greater accountability to stakeholders. It is vital that each project tests new ideas with the potential for wide application and broad environmental benefits. As of September 2000, over forty pilot experiments are being implemented and several additional projects are in various stages of development.

## SUMMARY OF THE FORT WORTH PROJECT

As part of their program to address urban blight, the city of Fort Worth faces significant costs for the demolition of dozens of abandoned structures containing asbestos bearing materials. Under this XL project, the city will test the effectiveness of an alternative, less costly method for demolishing such structures compared to the method required by the Clean Air Act. The project consists of three phases. In Phase 1, the city will test its method by monitoring asbestos emissions from the demolition of a structure containing asbestos, but not subject to the federal asbestos standard by virtue of its classification as a residential building with four or fewer dwelling units. In Phase 2, the city will monitor asbestos emissions as it demolishes two additional structures, one using the federally mandated method and the other using the alternative method. If the tests in the first two phases are successful, Fort Worth will be allowed to conduct a specific number of demolitions using its method during the final phase of the project.

Two agreements will be executed under this project. The first agreement lays out the phased approach for the project and the asbestos monitoring plan the city will use during Phase 1. Later, stakeholders will develop the final project agreement covering the last two phases of the project. This XL project, EPA's 46<sup>th</sup>, was signed on September 29, 2000.

## SUPERIOR ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

The city of Fort Worth intends to demonstrate that its method for demolishing structures containing asbestos will protect the public from asbestos emissions as well as the current federal method does. Moreover, the city expects that their innovative, lower-cost demolition method will allow them to accelerate the pace of demolitions, thereby eliminating sites potentially harboring illegal activities and reducing community safety/health hazards associated with abandoned structures.

## FLEXIBILITY

The city does not need regulatory flexibility to perform Phase 1 of the project, since the structure being demolished will not be subject to the requirements of the federal asbestos standard. However, for any demolitions performed during Phases 2 and 3 using the Fort Worth method, the city will need flexibility from the federal hazardous air pollutant standard for asbestos. Specifically, the city seeks flexibility to replace work practice requirements in the standard, which require asbestos removal prior to demolition, with their asbestos-in-place wet demolition techniques. With this flexibility, the city estimates that the cost of demolitions could be reduced by up to two-thirds.

**STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**

Fort Worth has contacted a number of community groups to discuss the project, and will conduct a public meeting prior to the demolition during Phase 1 of the project. A more formal stakeholder process, including national environmental groups as well as community representatives, will be conducted for negotiation of the final project agreement and implementation of Phases 2 and 3.

**APPROACHES TO BE TESTED**

- . Will the Fort Worth method for demolition of structures containing asbestos be as protective of public health as the current federal method?
- Will the Fort Worth method reduce the costs of demolitions, thereby helping to accelerate the city’s program against urban blight?

**CONTACTS**

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**FOR ELECTRONIC INFORMATION**

More information about this XL project, or the Project XL Program, is available on the Internet at <http://www.epa.gov/projectxl> under “Information on Specific XL Projects,” or via Project XL’s Information Line at (202) 260-5754.