



Project XL: Exxon Fairmont Coke Works Superfund Clean-up



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 experience and lessons learned from Project XL will assist EPA in redesigning its current regulatory and policy-setting approaches through a collaborative process. Project XL encourages testing of cleaner, cheaper, and smarter ways to attain environmental results superior to those achieved under current regulations and policies. It also requires substantial involvement by stakeholders, i.e. the people and organizations affected by EPA’s decisions. EPA hopes that these projects will provide opportunities for everyone to think “outside the box” of our current system and to find solutions to obstacles that limit environmental performance.

SUMMARY OF EXXON FAIRMONT COKE WORKS SITE CLEAN-UP

This project will test an alternative strategy for cleaning-up the Sharon Steel Fairmont Coke Works Superfund Site, located in Fairmont, WV. The site was placed on the EPA’s National Priorities List (NPL) on December 23, 1996. Exxon is the only Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) working with EPA and the West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) under an Administrative Order on Consent to address environmental concerns at this site.

To clean up the site, Exxon proposes that changes to the traditional Superfund process be made. These changes would affect: (a) site characterization and clean-up, (b) risk assessment procedures, (c) the management of onsite landfills, (d) mitigation requirements for EPA-created wetlands onsite, (e) the stakeholder and community involvement process, (f) reduction of paperwork requirements, and (g) the quality assurance process. In addition, as a new approach, Exxon will work with stakeholders and community groups to seek interested developers for commercial or industrial re-development of the site.

SUPERIOR ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

In this project, Exxon will implement changes to the Superfund process that will yield significant benefits to the environment, the surrounding community, and Exxon. Key benefits include:

- Shorter clean-up times that more quickly eliminate the potential risk to human health.
- A commitment from Exxon to work with stakeholders and community groups to seek interested developers for commercial/industrial redevelopment of the site.
- A commitment from Exxon to demolish and dispose of all on-site buildings and structures.

- Reduced administrative burden through the use of streamlined risk assessment and site characterization processes and electronic document/data submittals.

FLEXIBILITY

The Final Project Agreement (FPA) for this site provides Exxon with flexibility regarding 1) the use of streamlined removal processes in order to expedite clean up actions at the site, 2) mitigation processes for wetlands created by EPA during previous removal actions, 3) data validation reporting requirements, and 4) risk assessment criteria and analyses.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

As part of its FPA commitments, Exxon will continue to work actively to ensure and maintain involvement of key stakeholders and the general public during the clean-up of the site. Exxon will directly fund the WVDEP involvement in the project and will work with the Fairmont Community Liaison Panel (FCLP) and EPA in every stage of the clean-up process.

APPROACHES TO BE TESTED

Can coupling expedited Superfund clean-up procedures with land reuse commitments result in benefits to the community, the environment and industry ?

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FOR ELECTRONIC INFORMATION

More information about Project XL is available on the Internet at <http://www.epa.gov/ProjectXL> or via Project XL's Information Line at 202-260-5754.