



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

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EPA Proposes to Add Historic Potteries Site in Trenton, NJ to Superfund National Priorities List

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NEW YORK (September 4, 2024) – Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed to add the Historic Potteries site in Trenton, New Jersey, to the National Priorities List of Superfund sites, known as the NPL. Adding the site to the NPL would equip the EPA with the necessary tools to address significant lead contamination affecting residential areas, public spaces, and parks in the East Trenton neighborhood.

“Today, the EPA proposed to add the Historic Potteries site in Trenton to the National Priorities List of Superfund sites. Decades of using lead in pottery glazes have unfortunately left contamination in the soil around the East Trenton community,” **said EPA Regional Administrator Lisa F. Garcia**. “EPA has already done work to understand and address some of the most immediate risks posed by this site, but the area is large and warrants a much broader investigation under EPA’s superfund program. Listing the Historic Potteries site in the National Priorities List is a crucial step to tackle this legacy contamination and ensure a cleaner, safer environment for residents, students, and future generations in Trenton.”

The proposed site and the surrounding area, which includes the East Trenton and Top Road neighborhoods, have a rich history of pottery manufacturing, which thrived from the 1850s to the 1920s. During this period, over 70 potteries operated, producing various ceramic products. Lead was widely used in pottery glazes during that time, resulting in widespread soil contamination.

The EPA has been investigating the source of lead contamination in East Trenton since 2018. In 2020, research and field investigations identified historic pottery operations as the likely cause. In 2023, the EPA sampled soil across residential properties, schools, and parks. The results revealed lead levels exceeding health-based benchmarks, posing significant health risks, particularly to children. This past summer, the EPA installed protective measures over impacted areas discovered at the Ulysses. S. Grant Intermediate School. The EPA will be installing similar protective measures at impacted areas on residential properties and two East Trenton parks over the next several months.

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The proposal to add the Historic Potteries site to the Superfund NPL is subject to a 60-day public comment period. The public can submit comments online or by mail:

- **Online (preferred):** Visit www.regulations.gov and search “Historic Potteries” or “EPA-HQ-OLEM-2024-0374”
- **Mail:** Send comments to:
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, EPA Docket Center Superfund, EPA-HQ-OLEM-2024-0374, Mail Code 28221T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460

Background

The NPL includes the nation’s most serious uncontrolled or abandoned releases of contamination. The list serves as the basis for prioritizing EPA Superfund cleanup funding and enforcement actions. Only releases at sites included on the NPL are eligible to receive federal funding for long-term, permanent cleanup.

EPA proposes sites to the NPL based on a scientific determination of risks to people and the environment, consistent with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan. Before EPA adds a site to the NPL, a site must meet EPA’s requirements and be proposed for addition to the list in the Federal Register, subject to a 60-day public comment period. EPA will add the site to the NPL if it continues to meet the listing requirements after the public comment period closes and the agency has responded to any comments.

For information about Superfund and the NPL, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/superfund>.

Visit the [Historic Potteries Superfund site profile page](#) for additional background and site documents.

Visit the [Historic Potteries Response Page](#) for more details about EPA’s earlier work at the site.

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