

SMS Newsletter

Sites Management Section
Waste Management and Prevention Division
Department of Environmental Conservation

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What does the SMS do?

The Sites Management Section (SMS) provides State oversight for the investigation and cleanup of properties where a release of a hazardous material has contaminated the environment, including soils, groundwater, sediment, surface water and indoor air.

When contamination is found to be above legal limits, SMS Project Managers make sure the issue is being looked into according to the updated [2024 Investigation and Remediation of Contaminated Properties Rule \(IRule\)](#). They notify the responsible party, who must hire a qualified environmental consultant to evaluate and clean up the contamination. SMS Project Managers then regularly communicate with the consultants and responsible parties to ensure the work is progressing properly, meets the rule's requirements, and is completed on time.

The VTDEC Brownfields Program is also within the SMS. Brownfield Project Managers work with developers and environmental consultants on properties where the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse may be complicated by contamination.

Key SMS Stats:

As of the end of January 2025, there are 1,491 “open” hazardous sites in Vermont. These are properties that are in varying stages of the investigation, cleanup or monitoring of contaminant releases. Many of these open sites are “legacy sites”, or releases which were discovered in the 1990s which were not assessed or remediated according to current standards. The SMS has been actively developing strategies to address these older sites and move them closer to closure. Sites entering the Brownfields Reuse and Environmental Liability Limitation Act (BRELLA) Program make up most of the “new” sites.

Who we are:

Over the past few years the SMS has grown from a group of 12 to 24 ([WMPD Organization Chart](#)). Here’s how the

SMS is structured and what we all work on:

Trish Coppolino: SMS Senior Environmental Program Manager Staff: Eben Pendelton: Project Manager & PCB Coordinator Malayika Vincent: Project Manager, PFAS Lead		
SMS Managers:		
Sarah Bartlett: Brownfields Program Manager	Kasey Kathan: Environmental Program Manager	Matt Moran: PCF Administrator & Environmental Program Manager
Staff:	Staff:	Staff:
Caitlyn Bain: Project Manager, Brownfields Program & Spill Team member	Kim Caldwell: Project Manager & Brownfields Program, NPL sites	Rob Farley: Project Manager
Grahame Bradley: Project Manager & Brownfields Program, National Priorities List (NPL) sites	Shawn Donovan: Project Manager, Brownfields Program & Spill Team Member	Matt Becker: Project Manager
Kassie Kimmey: Project Manager & Brownfields Program	Kristi Herzer: Project Manager, Brownfields Program & Technical Program Lead	Stephanie Helburn: Project Manager
Lynda Provencher: Project Manager, Brownfields, Rules & Policies Lead	Charlie Lawrence: Project Manager, NPL sites	Zach Neudeck: Project Manager & Spill Team member
Max Saylor: Project Manager & Brownfields	Richard Spiese: Project Manager, NPL sites	Noelle Stroik: Project Manager
Monica Ladago: Project Manager & Brownfields	Rachel Twerdowsky: Project Manager, NPL sites	

SMS Hot Topics:

Brownfields/BRELLA: In 2024, 25 properties were enrolled in the BRELLA Program. Several housing projects enrolled in the BRELLA Program are well underway, including the Cetrangolo Lot in Northfield, 376, 398 & 416 Main St in West Rutland, and the Marsh House in Waterbury.

The BRELLA application is now online: [BRELLA application](#)

The Brownfields Program still has assessment funding available. The application is also online: [Funding application](#)

Brownfields on the Big Stage: The Coburn General Store, SMS#900503 in Strafford, VT is an actively managed site and has garnered attention at the national level with hometown ties for artist Noah Kahan. [See here!](#)

PFAS: In 2023, Vermont ANR-DEC conducted a state-wide assessment of PFAS in private drinking water wells, sampling over 500 residences and providing treatment to any residences with drinking water exceeding the state's standard of 20 ppt for the sum of five compounds (PFOA, PFOS, PFNA, PFHxS, PFHpA). In addition, the State responded to exceedances of the drinking water standard with site investigations to determine degree and extent of the contamination and potential sources.

Upon discovering contaminated drinking water supplies in Bennington south of the Saint Gobain Chemfab site and in Shaftsbury just north of the site, extensive sampling of drinking water supplies (over 150 wells) was undertaken by the VTDEC in 2023 and 2024 to determine the extent of the contamination and to determine residences with health exceedances to take steps to protect public health.

PCBs: Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are human-made chemicals that were used in building materials and electrical equipment before 1980. Schools renovated or built before 1980 are more likely to have PCBs in their building materials, typically caulk and fluorescent light ballasts.

Vermont has requirements for schools to test for PCBs and to make fixes if levels are high. In 2021, the Vermont legislature passed Act 74 requiring all schools built or renovated before 1980 to test their indoor air for PCBs. The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has the authority to require schools to make fixes that will lower exposure to PCBs, if levels are found at or above the school action level.

Latest update from the PCBs in Schools Program:

- Funding continues to be prioritized for mitigation and remediation at schools with occupancy restrictions
- 148 schools (45%) of schools have been tested with 31% above the School Action Level (SAL)
- Some school districts are exploring other funding opportunities to work towards cleanup



After starting the 2024-25 school year in tents due to summer PCBs sampling results, the North Country Union High School students returned to their building in October.

Petroleum Cleanup Fund (PCF):

The annual PCF Report from the Petroleum Cleanup Fund Advisory Committee to the Legislature was finalized and has been posted on our website: [Petroleum Clean-Up Fund](#)

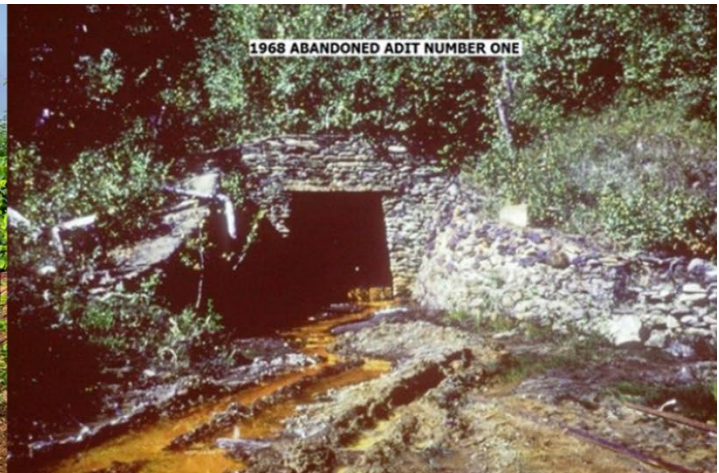
The PCF Procedures are being updated and will be transitioned to a Rule. A pre-rulemaking stakeholder meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2025 at 2:00 pm in the Cherry B Conference room at the Waterbury State Office Complex, located at 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT. The purpose of the meeting will be to review proposed changes and solicit feedback from stakeholders before embarking on the legislative rulemaking process.

Superfund/National Priorities List:

There are 14 sites in Vermont which are on the [EPA National Priorities List \(NPL\)](#).

Recent funding from the Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act has allowed some of these sites to move forward with cleanup activities. Recent happenings at a few of these sites include:

Pike Hill Mine (Corinth): In 2024, bat studies continued to evaluate and protect threatened and endangered species, and archeological investigations began to record historic resources that will be impacted by the cleanup. The first phase of the cleanup started, including soil amendments where existing material will be left in place and tree clearing in preparation for phase two. Excavation of waste rock and tailings with consolidation in a capped waste cell is anticipated to begin in 2026.



Ely Copper Mine (Vershire): Cleanup activities form Operable Units OU1 and OU2 began in 2024, led by EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers. This work will continue through 2026 and include excavation of mine waste and capping it onsite. VTDEC also worked with contractors last year to document historic resources prior to cleanup. More information including monthly cleanup updates can be found here: www.epa.gov/superfund/ely

Commerce Street Plume (Williston): Activities to remediate groundwater at the site began in 2024 and will continue this year to treat ~70 acres of trichloroethylene (TCE). Injection wells are being installed to add specific materials to the ground, including vegetable oil and nutrients, to fuel bacterial processes and accelerate the natural breakdown of

contaminants. More information can be found at www.epa.gov/superfund/commercestreet.

Five-year reviews, a comprehensive assessment on the performance of sites that have undergone clean-up efforts, determine whether any further actions to protect public health and the environment are required. In 2024, five-year reviews were completed at six Vermont sites. More information on these sites and the findings of the five-year reviews can be found [here](#).

What else the SMS is working on:

Administrative Use Controls (AUCs): During the past legislative session, 10 V.S.A §6615f Administrative Use Controls at contaminated sites was passed. An AUC is an institutional control which places a restriction on the extent of the improvement, use, or access of land at a property on the State’s Hazardous Sites List to help minimize the potential for exposure to a hazardous material and to protect the integrity of a remedy. The SMS is developing a process for petitioning sites to receive an AUC with a Frequently Asked Questions document.

Environmental Data Collection and Analysis Guidance: This [guidance document](#) was updated in September 2024. We recommend you review this if you haven’t already. You may have noticed PMs paying particular attention to proper sampling and data collection techniques – this is to ensure that sites are being assessed properly, and risks are being identified and managed appropriately.

Spill Program Corner:

The Spill Program is not part of the SMS, but is closely related, as many “spills” (releases) become sites. The Spill Program works with first responders and responsible parties to determine if a spill impacts or threatens sensitive receptors such as surface waters or drinking water wells and ensures the cleanup is performed to State standards. Team members oversee the cleanup of a spills, and work with Environmental Enforcement to enforce applicable environmental regulations. A spill becomes a site (and subject to additional IRule requirements) when long-term management of a release will be needed due to impacts to sensitive receptors. To report a spill, call 802-828-1138 during office hours, or 800-641-5005, 24/7.

Spills Count: In 2024, the Spill Program received 719 reports of hazardous material releases, 56 of which were related to the July 2024 flood events.



A release in a basement (left), a propane tank carried by flood current onto Wolcott Street in Hardwick (photo by Vaness Fournier), flood damage at Barnet

Village Store (WPTZ).

Did you know?

The WMPD Hazardous Waste Program and Tanks Program also have a newsletter! They can be found here:

[Haz Waste Newsletter](#); November 2024

[UST Program Newsletter](#); December 2024

Give DEC a follow on Social Media! [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#). These pages share information from the Sites Management Section, the rest of the Department of Environmental Conservation, and photos of our beautiful State.

We're open to ideas for future SMS Newsletters!

Let us know what you'd like to see covered in future Newsletters. We're planning on releasing them on a quarterly basis. Email your ideas to: lynda.provencher@vermont.gov



Language Access Notice

Questions/Free Language Services | SERVICES LINGUISTIQUES GRATUITS | भाषासम्बन्धी निःशुल्क सेवाहरू | SERVICIOS GRATUITOS DE IDIOMAS | 免費語言服務 | BESPLATNE JEZIČKE USLUGE | БЕСПЛАТНЫЕ УСЛУГИ ПЕРЕВОДА | DỊCH VỤ NGÔN NGỮ MIỄN PHÍ | 無料通訳サービス | ነጻ የቋንቋ አገልግሎቶች | HUDUMA ZA MSAADA WA LUGHA BILA MALIPO | BESPLATNE JEZIČKE USLUGE | အခမဲ့ ဘာသာစကား ဝန်ဆောင်မှုများ | ADEEGYO LUUQADA AH OO BILAASH AH | خدمات لغة مجانية: anr.civilrights@vermont.gov or 802-636-7827.

The Sites Management Section hopes that by providing translation services to persons who speak a language other than English as their native language, we will be able to improve understanding of the regulations that govern site investigation and cleanup. To access ANR's free translation service, please visit the [ANR Language Services](#) webpage. ●

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Sites Management Section

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[HTTPS://DEC.VERMONT.GOV/WASTE-MANAGEMENT/CONTAMINATED-SITES](https://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/contaminated-sites)