

Delavan Borg Instruments

PUB-RR-815

January, 2009

Delavan Borg Instruments

902 E. Wisconsin Ave.
Delavan, WI
Walworth County

14 Acres

Location: Downtown Delavan, alongside train tracks in the Ann Street Railroad Corridor.

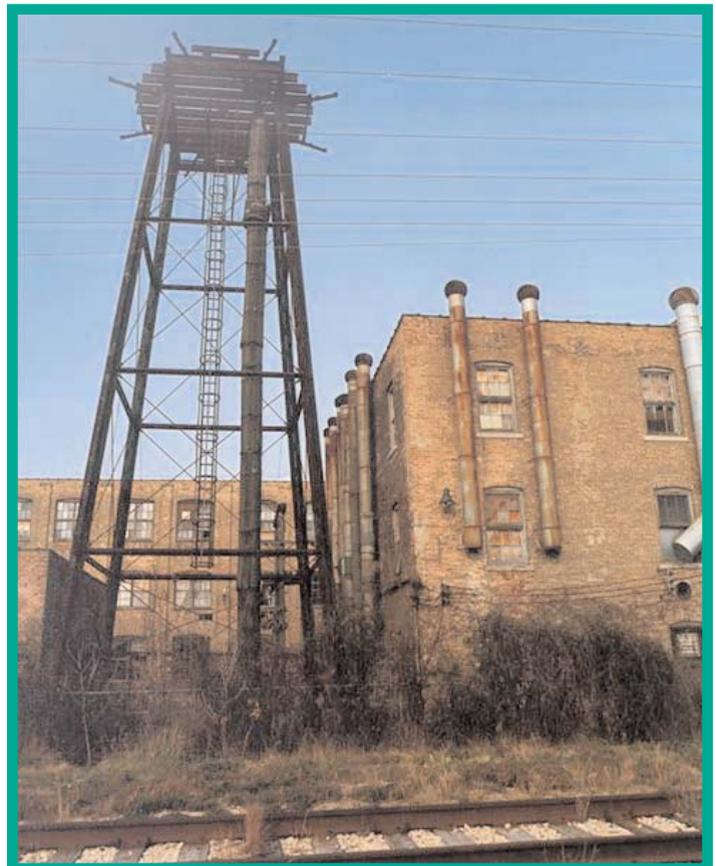
Once the heart of a small industrial corridor, a blighted section of Delavan is now serving as a natural green space and storm water retainer.

History

For 100 years, the city of Delevan has been home to industrial activity. This parcel of land first served as the home of the Bradley Knitting Company factory in 1903. Borg Instruments began leasing space in building in 1929 and purchased the property outright in 1941, when the Bradley Knitting Company ceased operations.

Borg Instruments' first products were clocks for the burgeoning auto industry. Eventually, the company moved into military and home appliance timers. In 1989, Borg Instruments moved from the Wisconsin Avenue site to Delavan's Industrial Park, where it still employs residents to this day.

With the factory long closed, the site had become an eyesore and potential environmental and health hazard. After 2000, the city began purchasing parcels in the Ann Street Corridor, including the Borg site, as part of its plan to remake and revitalize the area. Officials hoped to not only cleanup contamination but also address blight, graffiti and crime, alleviate stormwater flooding and provide new land for commercial redevelopment and jobs.



The former Borg Instruments brownfield in Delavan (DNR photo). This large facility had been the home of industrial activity in Delavan for 100 years.



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Remediation and Redevelopment Program

PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707
<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr>



Investigation and Cleanup

The former Borg Instruments site turned out to have substantial pollution on the property. Petroleum from leaky fuel oil tanks had contaminated sections of soil. Chlorinated solvents were discovered in the groundwater and suspected in the soil, and two of the city's wells were located very close to the property.

With financial and technical assistance from the DNR's Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program, cleanup work began. Fuel storage tanks were removed. Air sparging techniques were implemented to remove petroleum contamination. Following remediation, testing at the site showed remarkable improvements in groundwater quality and petroleum levels.

As part of the cleanup operation, the former instruments factory was demolished. All efforts were made to recycle as much of the building material as possible. When demolition was completed, the recycled material amounted to:

- 14,975 tons of concrete;
- 1,200 board feet of oak;
- 517 tons of scrap iron;
- 338,000 bricks;
- 1,285 PCB ballasts;
- 60 mercury switches; and
- 2,130 florescent lamps.

Redevelopment

After cleanup was complete, the city turned the former factory site into a natural green space. A large stormwater retention pond was made the centerpiece of the redevelopment, in an effort to curb the flooding which previously affected the neighborhood. Landscapers planted natural prairie and wetland vegetation on the property rather than grass -- which takes extra resources and water to maintain.

The successful reclamation project was recognized with a U.S. Environmental Protection

Agency (EPA) award presented to city officials at the 2008 National Brownfields Conference in Detroit, Michigan.

Financial, Liability, Technical Assistance

Cleanup of the former Borg Instruments property was funded through two DNR Brownfields Site Assessment grants totaling \$132,340, and a \$200,000 DNR Brownfields Green Space and Public Facilities Grant.

In addition, the city also received DNR technical assistance and an off-site liability exemption for a neighboring property due to contamination that had migrated from the Borg property.

Contacts

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The former Borg property after cleanup and redevelopment (DNR photo). The project received DNR site assessment and green space grants totaling more than \$300,000.

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