

# Wausau Energy Bulk Plant

PUB-RR-831

March, 2009

## Wausau Energy Bulk Plant

901 East Thomas Street  
Wausau, WI  
Marathon County

.878 Acres

**Location:** Near the Wausau city center, adjacent to both residential and industrial properties, as well as a railroad.

**Tanks for gas and oil get taken out and new tanks for locally-made beer are installed at a new Wausau brewery, thanks in-part to remediation assistance from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).**

### History

Since the 1930s, the Wausau Energy Bulk Plant serviced the gas and oil needs of the Wausau community. At one time there were 28 aboveground and underground storage tanks on the property.

When the company folded in 1997, the facility went into disrepair, property taxes went unpaid and the petroleum products, which had leached into the ground, needed to be addressed. Since it did not have an appropriate fence, the site was also accessible to the public, making it an unsafe attraction for unwanted visitors. In short, the neighborhood needed something to happen.



*Leftover petroleum containers were left at the site of the former bulk plant (photo courtesy city of Wausau).*

### Investigation and Cleanup

With encouragement from a local neighborhood group, city leaders chose to take action. Due to a provision in Wisconsin's state laws, Marathon County was able to retain control of the property and hand the site over to the city of Wausau with no property tax debt. The city then received a Brownfield Site Assessment Grant from the DNR for \$30,000 to conduct Phase I and II environmental site assessments, a full site investigation and petroleum tank removals.

Soil contamination exceeding state regulations was discovered in the area where the underground storage tanks had been located. Other areas of the property also had levels of contamination above state standards.



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Remediation and Redevelopment Program

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## Redevelopment

A neighboring business purchased the property and expanded their operations. The property was eventually sold to the Bull Falls Brewery, which describes itself as Wausau's first distributing microbrewery.

## Financial, Liability, Technical Assistance

The DNR's Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program partnered with the Department of Commerce, city of Wausau, Marathon County, and Longfellow Building Better Neighborhoods Committee to make this project a success.

The DNR's Brownfield Site Assessment Grant funded \$30,000 in site investigation costs; Marathon County waived \$39,000 in back taxes on the property; and the Department of Commerce funded more than \$25,000 in clean up costs.



*A new microbrewery now operates on this former brownfield site (photo courtesy Bull Falls Brewery).*

## Contacts

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