

Rapid Service Bulk Plant

PUB-RR-834

February, 2009

Rapid Service Bulk Plant

151 South Freemont Street
River Falls, WI
Pierce County

.21 Acres

Location: Less than 50 feet from the Kinnikinic River in River Falls, along a busy public walking and biking trail.

No one wants to see big, rusting gas tanks on an afternoon stroll. Now, with DNR assistance, those tanks are now gone, along with their threat to the environment.

History

For more than 50 years, home heaters and cars around the city of River Falls were powered from fuel delivered to the Rapid Service Bulk Plant. It was located in the heart of the city, not far from neighborhoods, a school and the Kinnikinic River.

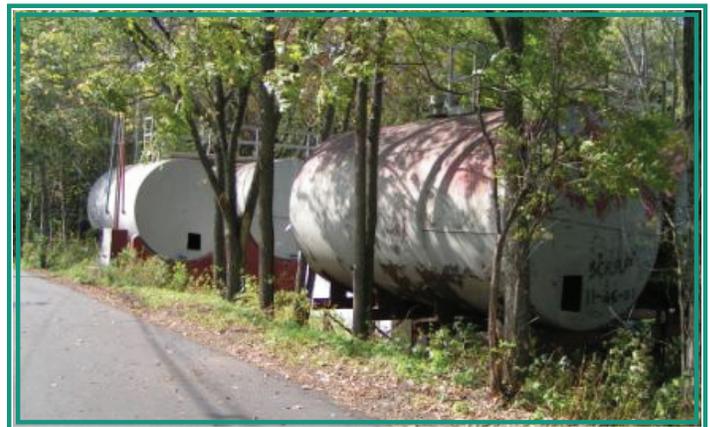
Eventually the bulk plant was shut down, and then briefly owned by Skoglund-Heutmaker, who never actually operated the facility. With no ongoing operations at the site, and no new buyers, it quickly went into disrepair. Storage tanks began to rust and graffiti was turning up all over the property. Open access holes in the storage tanks and an

unsafe storage building could have spelled trouble for curious trespassers. Plus, the police chief was worried the site could be a hot spot for crime, and the proximity to a city bike trail meant a lot of people could see the blighted tanks and buildings.

Working together with the DNR's Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program, River Falls' leaders were able to take control of the bulk plant property, which was officially tax delinquent.

Investigation and Cleanup

Utilizing state grant funds, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was conducted at the former bulk plant. An ensuing investigation revealed soil and groundwater contamination from petroleum products, including diesel range organics (DROs), gasoline range organics (GROs) and benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene (BTEX). Following site assessment, wrecking crews went to work. Six aboveground storage tanks were



Unused petroleum tanks once sat empty next to a public bike trail in River Falls (photo courtesy DNR).



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Remediation and Redevelopment Program

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removed. Buildings and a loading dock on the property were demolished and asbestos properly disposed. Roughly 550 tons of contaminated soil were removed from the site.

Redevelopment

Since the property is adjacent to a bike and walking trail, the city of River Falls chose to turn the property into a park. Following remediation, the city replanted the area with a mix of native plant seed and the site is now a public greenspace.



With RR Program assistance the tanks, along with their chemical hazards, were removed and the area is now a park (photo courtesy DNR).

Financial, Liability, Technical Assistance

The successful remediation and redevelopment of the former petroleum bulk plant was facilitated in a collaborative effort by five partners: the city of River Falls, the RR Program, the DNR's Parks & Recreation Department and the Department of Commerce.

The Brownfields Site Assessment Grant from the DNR funded \$30,000 of the cleanup. The city was able to use the back tax amount as part of the matching funds for the grant.

Cleanup at the site came in at a price tag of \$53,000.

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