

# Mobile Blasting

PUB-RR-854

February 2010

## Mobile Blasting

1604 S. 43rd Street  
West Milwaukee, WI  
Milwaukee County

3.3 acres

**Location: An industrial section of the village of West Milwaukee, about one mile south of Miller Park.**

**The Wisconsin DNR comes to the rescue of this “orphan site” to clean up contamination and help the community attract new business.**

## History

Like many Milwaukee-area properties, the former Mobile Sand Blasting and Painting site had a history of use that went back more than 100 years. As early as 1910, it was known as the Cream City Boiler Works. Over time, the property was used for boiler-making, and eventually restructured into a sand-blasting and painting operation which ended business in 1988. A former foundry once stood on an adjacent property, and the side-by-side brownfields sat idle for nearly a decade.

## Investigation and Cleanup

Contamination at the former Mobile Blasting site was extensive. Waste from sand blasting, paint and pipes with rotting insulation were just some of the materials posing a danger. Testing on the property revealed lead,

polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and asbestos.

An environmental consultant was hired to do remediation work at the property. Work included demolition of the buildings on-site, removal of soil contaminated and the excavation of an underground vault.

Potential human contact to remaining contaminated soil was prevented through construction of a cap – in this case, a new commercial building, parking lot and additional landscaping. New buildings at the property were protected from any potential vapor intrusion from below the cap, through a ventilation system installed as part of the slab foundation.



*Demolition begins at the former Mobile Blasting property in West Milwaukee. The site sat empty for a decade until the DNR partnered with the village of West Milwaukee to move forward with redevelopment (photo courtesy DNR).*



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Remediation and Redevelopment Program

PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707  
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## Redevelopment

The village worked with private developers to build the new Stadium Business Center, which was completed in 2002. The Center consists of a 44,000 square-foot office and warehouse facility that houses six businesses and employs approximately 130 people. The unique construction of the building's interior – involving movable wall pieces which allow for more spatial flexibility – helped attract new or re-locating businesses. The site's property value has jumped from \$300,000 to approximately \$2.5 million.

## Financial, Liability, Technical Assistance

In 2001, the DNR Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program conducted a \$1.8 million removal action at the property, under the State Funded Response Program, which included investigation and cleanup. Project developers were also awarded \$390,000 from the Department of Commerce brownfield grant program and village officials contributed more than \$312,000 in additional city funding to clean up the property.



*Following remediation work, the West Milwaukee site now hosts a 44,000 square-foot office and warehouse complex, which increased the property tax value by more than \$2 million (photo courtesy Real Estate Recycling).*

## Contacts

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