

# Speed Queen

PUB-RR-856

February, 2010

## Speed Queen

430 Washington Avenue  
Omro, WI  
Winnebago County

2 Acres

**Location: A mostly residential neighborhood of Omro.**

**Remediation at a former manufacturing facility, with a history of using machine oil as a dust suppressant, provides a new location for a local tool company.**

### History

The Speed Queen facility in Omro was built in the 1950s for the manufacture of aluminum die-cast parts of washing machines. The site consisted of several buildings: a 13,500 square foot die-cast building – which housed the original die-cast machine, melting furnaces and offices – , a 25,000 square foot addition, and a 4,500 square foot storage garage.

In 1979, Raytheon Commercial Laundry purchased Speed Queen and continued operate the facility until 1998. In 1998, to Raytheon sold the business to Alliance Laundry, but retained ownership of the vacant Omro property due to on-going site investigations.

## Investigation and Cleanup

Site investigation began in June 1995, when petroleum-contaminated soils were discovered in an area of proposed construction for a new loading dock. Excavation of 3,000 cubic yards of soil and temporary off-site storage had already occurred when Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were identified in soil samples. Raytheon Company, as property owner, assumed responsibility and proactively conducted investigation and remediation of the stockpiles and other on-site environmental and health concerns.



*Before demolition, the former Speed Queen facility in Omro was poorly maintained (photo courtesy DNR).*

Contamination was identified in surface soils of the parking area and in the concrete flooring and walls of the die cast building. Groundwater was not impacted by any of the releases and the contamination was confined to the property.



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Remediation and Redevelopment Program

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In July 2005, the die-cast building was demolished and in March 2006 the most significantly impacted soils were excavated. Approximately 1,020 tons of material (concrete and soil) was disposed of at a landfill for hazardous materials. A concrete pad now acts as a protective cover over the area where some contaminated soil remains.



*The new Oshkosh Tool Company provides increased tax revenue and the potential for new jobs in Omro (photo courtesy DNR).*

## Redevelopment

Officials estimate current property value at \$445,600. The property was purchased by Oshkosh Tool Company, who manufactures specialized hand tools at this new site. The redevelopment has put the facility back into active use and has the potential to bring new jobs to the small community of Omro.

## Financial, Liability, Technical Assistance

The responsible party, Raytheon Company of Massachusetts, played an important role in remediating and transforming a brownfield property into a prime manufacturing location. No government funding was used for this work. Raytheon estimated the entire project cost at approximately \$1 million.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Remediation and Redevelopment Program supplied technical advice and oversight of the project.

## Contacts

Kathy Sylvester, Hydrogeologist  
WDNR Remediation & Redevelopment Program  
(920) 424-0399  
Kathy.Sylvester@wisconsin.gov

Bob Luhrs, Senior Manager  
Remedial Programs  
Raytheon Company  
(781) 768-3995



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