

Ashland Precision Products

PUB-RR-902

August 2011

Ashland Precision Products

3600 Ellis Ave
Ashland, WI
Ashland County

10 acres

Location: A rural area not far from downtown Ashland, adjacent to a wetland.

A tip about illegal dumping at a manufacturing site leads to DNR intervention to protect a nearby wetland and attract a new owner.

History

The former Ashland Precision Products company operated for more than 40 years along a rural highway just outside of downtown Ashland. The manufacturing facility made small machined parts, such as eyeglass screws and dental instruments, starting in the early 1960s.

In 2005, Ashland Precision Products shut down operations and abandoned the property. One month after the closing, the DNR received an anonymous complaint that waste material had been illegally dumped on site. The complaint indicated that waste from the facility had been disposed in a wooded area east of the building, while liquid wastes had been dumped into the septic system.

The owner sold the property in 2006, with the agreement that the new owner would conduct an investigation and cleanup.



A view of remediated soil at the former Ashland Precision Products business (photo courtesy DNR).

Investigation and Cleanup

A Phase II Environmental Site Assessment confirmed the presence of mineral oil, cutting oil, lubricating oil, metal shavings and other manufacturing debris on the property. Lead was also discovered at levels hazardous to human health. Contamination on the property was found in both the soil and in the wetland area behind the main manufacturing building.

Cleanup of the property included the excavation and removal of 940 tons of contaminated soil, which was transported to a certified landfill for disposal. Also, an additional 20 cubic-yards of waste soil was excavated separately and handled as hazardous waste – due to lead contamination. Clean fill was delivered to the site to backfill the excavation.



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Remediation and Redevelopment Program

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Removal of impacted soils disturbed a natural wetland area on the property. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Water Management Program oversaw efforts to ensure that the ground in the area was restored to a condition that could support future wetlands.

Redevelopment

With remediation complete, the new owner was able to make a few changes to the building and adapt it for a new use.

HWC Enterprises LLC, a local manufacturer of sliding doors and swing entrance doors, uses the facility in conjunction with the company's other manufacturing operations in Ashland.

Financial, Liability, Technical Assistance

The DNR Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program provided technical assistance on the cleanup process. The DNR's Watershed Management Program assisted in restoring the health of the wetland.

A \$50,000 Department of Commerce Blight Elimination and Brownfield Redevelopment (BERB) grant allowed the new buyer to offset the remediation costs, helping facilitate the transaction.

Contacts

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