

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION AND
REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



THE BROWNFIELDS SITE ASSESSMENT
INITIATIVE

What is the initiative about?

The Brownfields Site Assessment Initiative was established by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to encourage the redevelopment and reuse of contaminated and potentially contaminated properties.

The Initiative is designed to help eligible property owners or prospective property owners determine the extent and type of contamination on their property AT NO COST. The Initiative, funded by the federal government, will help Maryland put abandoned or underutilized properties back into productive use.

What are brownfields?

Brownfields are industrial or commercial properties that are either abandoned or underutilized and are located in urban or suburban areas. Many (but not all) of these properties are suspected to be contaminated with hazardous waste. Often these properties are underutilized or abandoned due to concerns about cleanup costs and liability issues.

Who is eligible for the program?

Property owners and prospective property owners are both eligible to participate. Generally, the following conditions should be met for program eligibility:

- have perceived or known contamination;
- be vacant or underutilized;
- be located in a commercial or industrial area,
- redevelopment of property may create jobs; and
- remediation is feasible and will improve local tax base.

Properties where an outstanding enforcement order exists are not eligible to participate in the initiative. Properties that are on EPA's Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) list or the State Master List are eligible.

Why should I participate?

If you own or want to purchase property where there is suspected contamination, an environmental assessment is the first step in the redevelopment process.

Additionally, owners and prospective purchasers of property who are interested in applying to MDE's Voluntary Cleanup Program may apply for a brownfields assessment as well, which will reduce the investigation costs associated with an application to the Voluntary Cleanup Program.

How does this Initiative work?

If the property qualifies for the program, MDE will investigate past land use and may conduct soil, surface water and groundwater sampling. For those properties that are clean or only minimally contaminated, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and MDE will issue letters stating, based

on the results of the assessment, they have no further interest in the property. For those properties moderately contaminated or requiring additional investigation, MDE will provide suggestions on actions that should be taken.

Why is MDE doing this?

It is in everyone's best interest to redevelop and reuse brownfields. If these properties can be returned to productive uses, they can create jobs, improve the tax base, and they can also provide space for companies to expand and grow. Redevelopment of brownfields also supports the Smart Growth Initiative to reduce sprawl throughout the State. Most importantly, this program will help clean up sites that might otherwise remain contaminated.

For more information on how to apply for the Brownfields Site Assessment Initiative, contact:

James Carroll
Environmental Restoration and Redevelopment Program
(410) 537-3437

For information on Brownfield Financing Programs available from the Department of Business and Economic Development, contact:

Jim Henry
Division of Financing Programs
(410) 767-6353