



## EPA Continues Work to Protect Community Near the Tonawanda Coke Facility

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(New York, N.Y. – Nov. 15, 2018) Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that it is continuing to make progress in its ongoing assessment of environmental conditions of the Tonawanda Coke Corporation (TCC) facility in Tonawanda, N.Y, which ceased coke manufacturing operations on October 14, 2018.

EPA worked closely with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation throughout the facility shutdown process, which included shutting down coke ovens and purging the plant process systems of flammable gases. EPA is now the lead agency responsible for the site and is addressing it under the Superfund program. Superfund is a federal government program to clean up land in the United States that has been contaminated by hazardous substances. Sites on the federal Superfund list pose a potential risk to human health or the environment.

**“EPA is working to ensure that this facility doesn’t pose an immediate risk to the surrounding community and is conducting a comprehensive assessment of environmental conditions at this poorly-run facility,”** said EPA Regional Administrator Pete Lopez. **“EPA’s work will serve as a roadmap to managing and ultimately cleaning up the site.”**

EPA’s work at the facility includes:

- securing the site;
- maintaining utilities to the facility;
- detecting and assessing leaks in the process / by-products area;
- addressing contaminated soil;
- maintaining and monitoring two systems that treat plant process water and storm water from the site;
- sampling and removal of about 50-75 containers of hazardous waste from the site;
- sampling to determine areas in need of cleanup work, including excavation and removal of contaminated soil and liquids;
- winterizing equipment and pipes; and
- evaluating additional cleanup needs that may be required in the short or long-term.



In May 2017, EPA established a task force to restore the Superfund program to its rightful place at the center of the Agency's core mission to protect health and the environment.

[epa.gov/superfund/superfund-task-force](http://epa.gov/superfund/superfund-task-force)

During the shutdown of operations at the facility, EPA conducted air sampling, monitoring and surveillance in the community around the plant until all flammable gases were purged from the process systems. Laboratory analyses were performed, and EPA's analysis concluded that air contaminant levels established to protect the public were not exceeded.

EPA's current work at the facility is expected to continue over many months because of the size and complexity of the facility. EPA is using its short-term cleanup authority under Superfund to assess the Tonawanda Coke facility and perform cleanup actions. EPA is in discussion with New York State about how best to address the site long-term. The site is listed as a New York State Superfund site.

Community updates will be posted at EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/ny/tonawanda-coke-corporation-tcc-site>.

Under the Trump Administration, the Superfund program has reemerged as a priority to fulfill and strengthen EPA's core mission of protecting human health and the environment.

On the one-year anniversary of the EPA's Superfund Task Force Report, EPA announced significant progress in carrying out the report's recommendations. These achievements will provide certainty to communities, state partners, and developers that the nation's most hazardous sites will be cleaned up as quickly and safely as possible.

EPA's "Superfund Task Force Recommendations 2018 Update" is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-task-force-recommendations-2018-update>.

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