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**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, & CITY OF PORTSMOUTH TO CELEBRATE PROGRESS AT SUPERFUND SITE**

*Multi-Year Clean-Up Endeavor at Key Portsmouth Project Reaches New Milestones*

**PORTSMOUTH, VA** — The [Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA), the [Department of Environmental Quality](#) (DEQ), the [City of Portsmouth](#) and the [Portsmouth Ports & Industrial Commission](#) (PPIC) are gathering this morning to celebrate the progress on a key remediation project at the [Atlantic Wood Industries \(AWI\) Superfund Site](#) in Portsmouth, Virginia. The remediation project represents a joint effort by the EPA, DEQ, Commonwealth of Virginia, City of Portsmouth and PPIC. EPA and DEQ have spent approximately \$100 million over the past 10 years cleaning up the Site.

“The AWI Superfund Site remediation work is a showcase of how national, state and local agencies can work together to correct a serious environmental issue that impacted human health and the water quality of the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River” **said Mayor John L. Rowe Jr., City of Portsmouth Mayor.** “This remediation work will allow this industrial property to become a key future redevelopment of this entire industrial area. We’re excited for this site’s future use.”

The [AWI Superfund Site](#) is adjacent to the Southern Branch of the [Elizabeth River](#) and includes approximately 50 acres of industrialized waterfront land with contaminated soil and groundwater and approximately 35 acres of contaminated sediments in the river. These contaminants stem from the Site’s prior use as a wood treating facility, from 1926 to 1992. At one time, the Navy leased a portion of the western half of the AWI property for use as storage; filling low-lying areas with contaminated material. The Navy also conducted sand blasting activities adjacent to the Site. Abrasive blast media (ABM) contaminated with heavy metals such as copper, zinc, lead, and arsenic have impacted the Site.

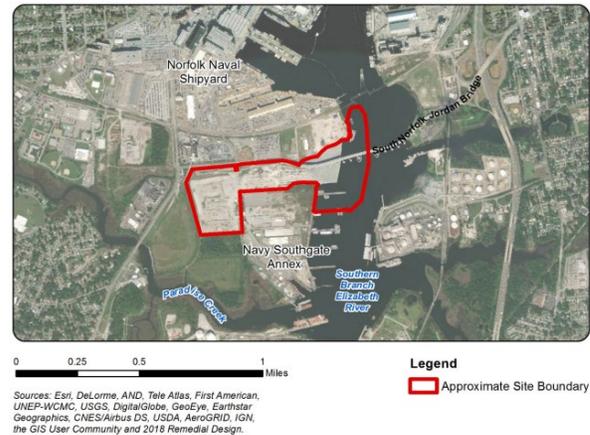
“This year marks the 50th anniversary of [EPA](#) and nearly 40 years of implementing the [Superfund program](#), which is in line with July’s anniversary theme, “Cleaning Up the Nation’s Land,” **said EPA Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Cosmo Servidio.** “The [Atlantic Wood Industries Superfund Site](#) is a prime example of how working together with state, local and private stakeholders can turn hazardous waste sites like this one into community assets, especially as it nears completion and readies for reuse and redevelopment.”

For over three decades, [EPA’s Superfund program](#) and its partners have remediated contaminated hazardous waste sites and furthered community goals for reuse. Communities reuse Superfund sites in many ways – parks, shopping centers, athletic fields, wildlife sanctuaries, manufacturing facilities, residences, roads and more. As of 2018, there were over 700 non-federal facility Superfund sites in new or continued use. At 529 of those sites, 8,690 businesses employ over 195,000 people, providing about \$13 billion in annual employment income. In 2018, those businesses generated over \$52 billion in estimated annual sales revenue.

“The collaboration among agencies to remediate contaminated properties such as this one is pivotal in Port cities such as Portsmouth,” **said James Toups, Chair of the [Portsmouth Port & Industrial Commission](#) (PPIC).** “Environmental standards are vital to our ecosystem’s health and wellbeing, and we need to work collectively to

bring these formerly contaminated sites up to standards in order to allow them to be redeveloped. The PPIC is grateful for the over \$100 million investment the City, EPA, DEQ and the State has made in this key site.”

“EPA has brought significant resources and expertise to complex sites like Portsmouth and others throughout Virginia,” said [Virginia Department of Environmental Quality \(VADEQ\) Director David K. Paylor](#). “DEQ and EPA will continue to work hard to ensure that Virginians have waters and lands that are safe and sustainable for decades to come.”



The remediation work will reduce human health risks from exposure, including ingestion and dermal contact. Work has been completed to reduce the risks to humans from the consumption of contaminated crabs and/or oysters taken from the Site as well as reduction in risks to ecological receptors, including benthic aquatic organisms, fish and birds, from contaminated sediments to levels that are acceptable.

“As a Port Host Community, Portsmouth has a number of properties with redevelopment and remediation opportunity in ideal locations for today’s industrial work,” **commented Robert D. Moore, Director of Portsmouth Economic Development**. “We appreciate the hard work of our partners at the EPA, DEQ, State and our local teams to bring this site up to redevelopment standards. Portsmouth is well positioned for a number of industrial ventures and we are ready to move forward on this site.”

For more information on the Atlantic Wood Industries, Inc. Superfund Site: <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csinfo.cfm?id=0302836>

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**About EPA Mid-Atlantic:** [EPA Mid-Atlantic](#) Region’s mission is to protect human health and the environment for Delaware, District of Columbia Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and seven federally recognized tribes. Meeting the diverse environmental challenges of a Region with the nation’s largest estuary, rural expanses and major cities and agricultural centers, EPA Mid-Atlantic’s successes are shouldered by the dedication and talents of its employees and the strong relationships it has fostered with partners in its states and communities. For more information, visit: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-02/documents/r3\\_digital-final-mid-atlantic-yir-report-2019.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-02/documents/r3_digital-final-mid-atlantic-yir-report-2019.pdf). Follow EPA Region 3 on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/eparegion3> and visit our Facebook page, at <http://www.facebook.com/EPAREGION3/>

**About Portsmouth Economic Development:** [Portsmouth Economic Development](#) (PED) works directly with business, education and government partners to build the foundation and advance the efforts of all residents, private and corporate, in the City of Portsmouth. PED helps businesses to start, locate and grow in Portsmouth by focusing on the advancement of strategic opportunities, by fostering the growth within target industries, preparing our residents for opportunities in those industries, and aligning our MWDBE businesses with opportunities to partner with larger organizations.