SUPERFUND

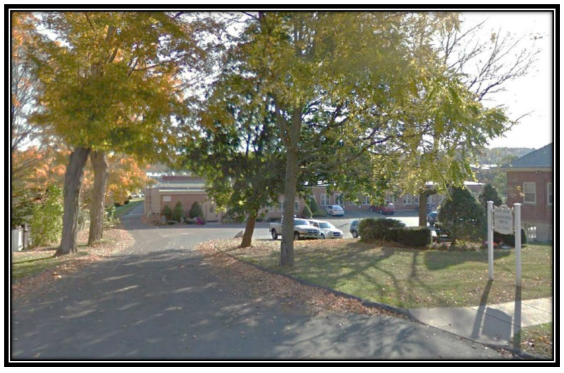
SITE UPDATE

# Durham Meadows Superfund Site
# Durham, CT

EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency

U.S. EPA | HAZARDOUS WASTE PROGRAM AT EPA NEW ENGLAND

**THE SUPERFUND PROGRAM** protects human health and the environment by investigating and cleaning up often-abandoned hazardous waste sites and engaging communities throughout the process. Many of these sites are complex and need long-term cleanup actions. Those responsible for contamination are held liable for cleanup costs. EPA strives to return previously contaminated land and groundwater to productive use.



This Site Update provides an overview of the Durham Meadows Superfund Site and information about the current cleanup activities taking place at the Durham Manufacturing Company at 201 Main Street, Durham, Connecticut by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP).

## SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

The Durham Meadows Superfund Site (Site) is located in the Town of Durham, Connecticut and includes an area of groundwater contamination generally centered on Main Street in Durham. The outer limits of the Site are defined by the extent of the groundwater contamination, generally bounded by Talcott Lane to the north; Brick Lane, Ball Brook, and Allyn Brook to the east; wetlands west of Maple Avenue to the west; and the intersections of Maple Avenue and Fowler Avenue with Main Street to the south.

The Site is centered around the two source areas: Durham Manufacturing Company (DMC), a currently operating manufacturing facility located at 201 Main Street and the former location of Merriam Manufacturing Company (MMC) at 281 Main Street. Both companies manufactured metal cabinets, boxes, and other items, using various solvents as part of these operations. The past disposal of wastewater in lagoons or sludge drying beds, spills at both facilities, and inadequate drum storage practices at MMC, among other things, contributed to the contamination at each facility and in the overall area of groundwater surrounding both facilities.

## KEY CONTACTS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## SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY(CONTINUED)

Contamination from volatile organic compounds (VOCs), commonly found in solvents, paints, and degreasers, has been detected in soil and groundwater at the former MMC facility and DMC facility, as well as in drinking water wells surrounding both industrial properties.

DMC was established in 1922 at 201 and 203R Main Street. An office building and two manufacturing buildings are currently located on the property. MMC was established in 1851 at 281 Main Street, operating at that location until March 1998, when the bulk of the factory was destroyed by fire.

In 1982, CT DEEP (known as CT DEP prior to 2011) detected VOCs in private drinking water wells in the Durham area. Under a CT DEEP order, MMC and DMC installed carbon filters on impacted residential wells. EPA discovered 1,4-dioxane in 2003-2004 in wells at MMC, DMC, and at several residences. Because 1,4-dioxane is not effectively captured by carbon filters, CT DEEP began supplying bottled water for drinking to several affected homes in the northern portion of the Site and required monitoring for 1,4-dioxane at residences throughout the Site.

## WHAT HAS BEEN DONE TO CLEANUP THE SITE

EPA signed a Record of Decision in 2005 to document the affected media and contaminants that presented an unacceptable risk to human health. The Site consists of three separate study areas. The following provides a summary by study area of the work implemented to date through federal, state, and Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) actions.

Merriam Manufacturing Company (MMC) Study Area - In 2011, EPA initiated a cleanup at the former MMC property at 281 Main Street and the adjacent residential property at 275 Main Street. The cleanup action included the demolition of a warehouse, the excavation and off-site disposal of approximately 58,000 tons of contaminated soil, excavation and restoration of wetland areas, and the removal and disposal of underground storage tanks. The MMC Study Area cleanup was to residential standards and addressed risks to human health from contamination in soil and soil vapor to through the removal of soil contamination exceeding Connecticut regulatory standards/risk-based criteria to allow for eventual redevelopment/reuse. The MMC Study Area cleanup was fully completed by 2013.

Site-Wide Groundwater Study Area and Alternative Water Supply (Waterline) - Interim actions were taken to address risk from contamination in drinking water wells by providing bottled water and installing carbon filters to remove contaminants and reduce the potential for exposure while studies were completed. Affected drinking water wells were monitored regularly by DMC and CT DEEP.

In 2019, following completion of the design to extend the water supply from the City of Middletown to provide a new drinking water source, EPA procured a contractor to complete the waterline installation. The cleanup included connection to the City of Middletown Water Distribution System to distribute an alternative source of public water to all residences currently affected by the Site groundwater contamination and a buffer zone of residences located near the contaminated area. This component of the remedy addressed current and future risks to human health from the ingestion of contaminated groundwater. The new waterline began service to the community in July 2022. In 2023 and 2024 EPA worked to address punch list items to complete the water line component. In 2025 the water system is scheduled to be transitioned to the Town of Durham and the City of Middletown for long-term operation and maintenance.

## WHAT HAS BEEN DONE TO CLEANUP THE SITE(CONTINUED)

EPA determined it was not technically practicable to cleanup the VOCs in the bedrock groundwater. Consequently, EPA established a technical impracticability zone and designed a long-term groundwater monitoring network for the dissolved plume to ensure no migration of groundwater occurs beyond its boundary. EPA has been conducting the monitoring and is currently funding one final year of monitoring. To date, the long-term monitoring has shown that the plume is stable and is not migrating. The long-term monitoring after 2025 will be performed and funded by CT DEEP.

Durham Manufacturing Company (DMC) Study Area –The DMC Study Area cleanup will include the excavation and off-site disposal of approximately 11,000 cubic yards of VOC contaminated soil to address risks to human health from contamination in soil and remove contaminants acting as a source to groundwater contamination. The cleanup was initially delayed due to lack of available federal funding; however, in 2021 funding was secured. In December 2024, a contract was awarded to Charter Contracting Company, LLC (Charter) to conduct the DMC Study Area cleanup.

## CURRENT SITE ACTIVITIES - DMC STUDY AREA

Planning and Mobilization - The DMC Study Area cleanup is underway with mobilization occurring in July 2025. Charter is currently conducting preparatory work in advance of soil excavation, including baseline/background air monitoring, noise monitoring, and vibration monitoring; constructing a support zone for equipment and material staging; installing temporary power poles and service to support cleanup activities and power the DMC facility when underground utilities are disturbed during excavation; sampling of soil for disposal and groundwater for water treatment purposes; and decommissioning selected monitoring wells and installing dewatering wells in excavation areas.

Multiple plans have been developed, including site safety and health, sampling and quality assurance, air monitoring, structural and vibration monitoring, demolition, soil management, water management, traffic control, and construction site management. Charter is beginning installation of the water treatment system, underground utility bypass, and installation of the DMC building underpinning support.

Excavation Process and Schedule – Excavation of contaminated soil is occuring in three areas with each area being completed as a separate phase. Each of the three areas will be further broken into cells with each cell being excavated and backfilled to grade before beginning excavation of the next cell. The excavated soil will be transported off-site for secure disposal to various locations depending on the levels of contaminants in the soil. All disposal facilities will be pre-approved by EPA prior to shipment off-site. Charter will live-load excavated soil to minimize the need for stockpiling. If any excavated soil cannot be exported by the end of the day, the soil will be placed on a liner and securely covered with polyethylene sheeting. Decontamination pads will be employed to ensure contaminated soil is not carried off-site by the trucks, and all trucks entering or leaving will be securely covered.

The extent of the contamination and the three areas of soil to be excavated are shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2, respectively. Excavation of the Northwest Cleanup Area (Phase 1A) is anticipated to begin in September and October, followed by the WS-20 Cleanup Area (Phase 1B) in November and December, and finally the Eastern Area Cleanup Area (Phase 2) in January and February. In spring 2026, after all excavation and backfilling is complete, disturbed areas will be repaved and/or reseeded and landscaped as necessary.

## CURRENT SITE ACTIVITIES - DMC STUDY AREA (CONTINUED)

Air Monitoring – The site-specific air monitoring plan includes real-time monitoring to assist in the management of dust and vapor control, and confirmatory sampling for chemical specific compliance against health-based criteria. For the real-time air monitoring, screening levels were developed to monitor for dust particulates (PM10) and total volatile organic compounds (TVOCs) and will be used to provide immediate notification so that construction activities can be managed to protect cleanup personnel and DMC staff and minimize the potential for any off-site emissions. Baseline air monitoring has been performed at 10 locations. The baseline data will be used during project implementation to monitor the effectiveness of the control measures. The 10 monitoring locations were along the perimeter of the three excavation areas, and depending on the location of work being conducted, four or more locations will have monitoring stations at any given time. During all intrusive activities, a full-time air quality technician will be onsite to oversee the real-time air monitoring stations, and conduct walk-around and additional perimeter air monitoring. The results of the real-time monitoring will be used to determine if dust and vapor control is needed to mitigate the potential for emissions to leave the Site or if activities need to be paused until additional controls can be implemented.

Noise and Traffic Control - The cleanup work is expected to create noise similar to a typical construction site. Continuous noise monitors are being used to assist with noise monitoring and control. Various trucks and other large vehicles will be traveling in and out of the DMC facility throughout the cleanup. During the busiest days, it is expected that approximately 20-30 trucks per day may be traveling in and out of the DMC facility. A flagger will be utilized as necessary to direct trucks for pedestrian and DMC worker safety and ensure school bus and related traffic has priority between 7:30am - 8:00am and 2:30pm - 3:00pm.

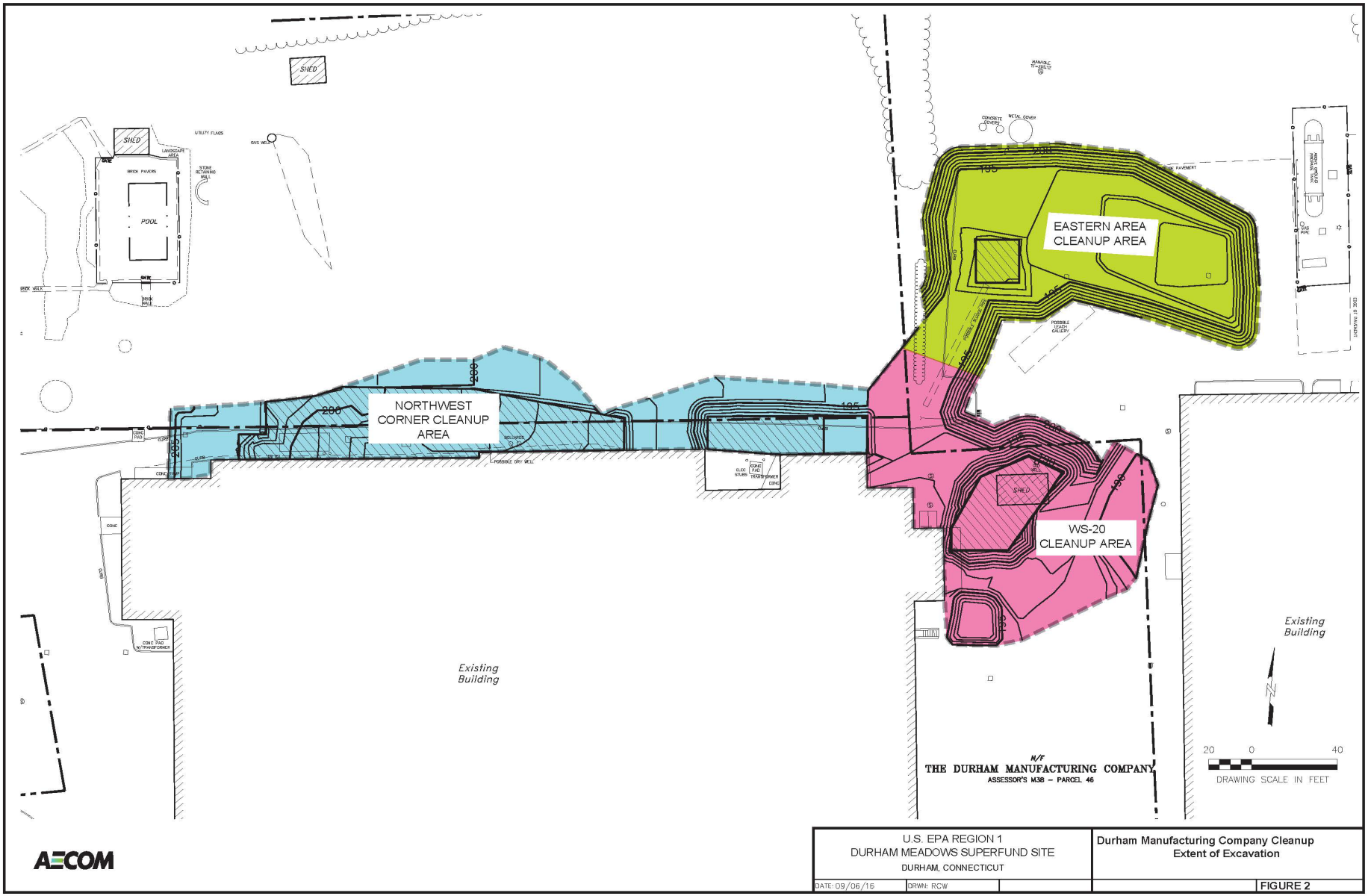
Work Hours/Duration – Work will be conducted between 7:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, with no work conducted on weekends or Federal Holidays. Charter will ensure no trucks or other equipment will be restricting the flow of traffic during the Durham Fair in September. No on-site operations will occur during the Thursday-Sunday of the fair itself, and the Site will be inspected and closed off at the end of work operations on Wednesday, September 24, 2025

## WHERE TO FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

EPA keeps Site project information and reference materials available to the public at web repositories. For further information please visit EPA's Durham Meadows Superfund Site Profile page (SPP) at: www.epa.gov/superfund/durham or Scan the QR code

To view Bi-weekly Progress Report Updates on the DMC Study Area Cleanup, look on the SPP under "Reports and Documents" on the "Site Documents & Data page" at this link:
DMC Study Area Cleanup Progress Reports


DMC
Main St.
F.W. Strong School
Pickett Ln.
FIGURE 1
EXTENT OF SOIL REMEDIATION AT DMC
Legend
Limits of Excavation
Date: 4/22/2024
AECOM
Imagery courtesy Maxar, Photo 2024
0 40 80 160
Feet


EASTERN AREA
CLEANUP AREA
NORTHWEST
CORNER CLEANUP
AREA
WS-20
CLEANUP AREA
Existing
Building
Existing
Building
N/F
THE DURHAM MANUFACTURING COMPANY
ASSESSOR'S M38 – PARCEL 46
20 0 40
DRAWING SCALE IN FEET
AECOM
U.S. EPA REGION 1
DURHAM MEADOWS SUPERFUND SITE
DURHAM, CONNECTICUT
Durham Manufacturing Company Cleanup
Extent of Excavation
DATE: 09/06/16
DRWN: RCW
FIGURE 2