



# Environmental News

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## **EPA and Oklahoma Declare 19 Former Service Station Sites “Ready for Reuse”**

Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Oklahoma Corporation Commission (OCC) issued the first “ready for reuse” determination for petroleum storage tanks to the city of Sayre, Oklahoma.

The state of Oklahoma and EPA agree that the city of Sayre has successfully completed its investigation and, where appropriate, cleaned the properties. The “ready for reuse” determination verifies that the environmental conditions on these sites are protective of human health and the environment based on their current use and anticipated future use as commercial/industrial properties.

EPA Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division Director Carl Edlund said, “Today’s announcement highlights our newest program that promotes the reuse of formerly used industrial properties. We are building on our experience using the enormously successful Brownfields program. Our ‘ready for reuse’ determinations clear the way by providing necessary assurances to help encourage developers to reuse these valuable natural resources.”

A “ready for reuse” determination provides, in a straightforward manner, specific information about each site including the nature and extent of contamination, the work performed, and the status of the properties that have been cleaned to meet state and federal requirements.

OCC Petroleum Storage Tank Division Director Brooks Mitchell said, “The residents and leaders of Sayre have shown that it is possible for government at all levels to work hand-in-glove with citizens to achieve remarkable things. The foundation for all the success of this program is the fact that it is ‘community-based.’ It is founded on the principle that no one cares more for, or knows more about, a particular community than the people who live in it.”

Sayre Mayor Jack Ivester said, “Sayre continues to be recognized in various fields as a leader in community development. The EPA determination further validates the farsightedness of our community leaders. Sayre will continue to lead the way developing a diversified community in which people want to live and raise their families.”

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Sayre is located in rural western Oklahoma along I-40. Once a major stop along Historic Route 66, many of the city’s businesses, including numerous gas stations, lost most of their customers when I-40 was constructed several miles to the south. After years of neglect, the old service stations became blighted. Many of the steel underground storage tanks still remained on the properties.

In 2001, Sayre asked the OCC for help dealing with the many abandoned service stations within the city. Sayre became the pilot city for the OCC’s “Community Project,” a program to help small communities address blighted former service stations. As part of the project, 19 former underground storage tank sites were identified and evaluated. Two sites required cleanup; the OCC removed seven tanks, excavated soil and razed a dilapidated building. In order to make other properties more marketable, the city removed an additional 15 tanks from five other sites and razed a second building.

Information concerning the current environmental conditions on the 19 underground storage tank sites and the risk management activities conducted to ensure protectiveness is summarized in the respective Oklahoma Risk-based Corrective Action Reports and Final Closure Letters. Copies of these documents may be obtained from OCC, Petroleum Storage Tank Division, P.O. Box 52000-2000, Oklahoma City, OK 73152-2000.

More information about the Sayre "ready for reuse" determination is available at [www.epa.gov/earth1r6/ready4reuse/](http://www.epa.gov/earth1r6/ready4reuse/).