



Oklahoma Site Wins Phoenix Award 2007

Henryetta Site Rises From Ashes – Returns to Productivity

Each year the Phoenix Awards Institute Inc., an environmental and community service nonprofit organization, recognizes a project for “Excellence in Brownfield Redevelopment” in Region 6 of the Environmental Protection Agency. Region 6 sites are in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Texas.



The 2007 winner of the prestigious Phoenix Award will go to the Henryetta Economic Development Authority (HEDA) for the Shurden Leist Industrial Park Project in Henryetta, Oklahoma. It is located in the northeastern part of the city on US Highway 75 and less than a mile from Interstate 40. The site is exciting because of the outstanding cooperative effort extended by state, community, city, county, U.S. government agencies, and private enterprises.

The Shurden Leist Park was once an industrial area with three zinc smelters which polluted the atmosphere, killed the vegetation and left behind huge amounts of hazardous waste. The last smelter closed in 1968. The previous owner/operator donated the property to the city in 1974, but the property lay dormant until the mid 1990’s when residents partnered with the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to begin a cleanup effort. The cleanup was conducted as a Time-Critical Removal Action under the authority of the EPA Superfund Removal Program. The mountains of waste were consolidated into a single pile with donated soil from a nearby closed coal mine and capped with clay donated by a local glass manufacturer. With the cap complete however, the City still had difficulty in interesting businesses to locate on the site. It remained vacant for ten years.

In 2004 the Henryetta Economic Development Authority (HEDA) requested help from the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ). After much work with ODEQ and many community discussions, the HEDA pursued and received grants to remove waste and replace it with clean soil and install utility corridors. The corridors, the clean site, the location and attractive business incentives combine to encourage businesses to locate at the park. The total project including the original cleanup and the redevelopment cost nearly \$9 million.



Now the Industrial Park consists of 70 acres of city-owned land with public electrical and natural gas service on site. Railroads and four-lane divided highways are easily accessible and the pavement on site connects with I-40. The award will be presented at the May 2008 National Brownfields Conference in Detroit, Michigan.