



Environmental News

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EPA and Louisiana Declare Norco Property “Ready for Reuse”

Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) issued a “ready for reuse” determination to Shell Chemical LP/Motiva Enterprises LLC in Norco, La. Motiva Enterprises is the first refinery in the nation to receive this designation.

EPA and DEQ agree that Shell/Motiva have successfully completed their investigation and risk management activities at the Norco East Site. The “ready for reuse” determination verifies that the environmental conditions on this property are protective of human health and the environment based on its current and anticipated commercial/industrial use.

"Today's announcement highlights the administration's newest program to promote the reuse of valuable industrial properties," EPA Regional Administrator Richard E. Greene said. "We are building on our experience using the enormously successful brownfields program signed into law by President Bush. Our 'ready for reuse' determinations clear the way for reuse of valuable natural resources by providing necessary encouragement and assurances to developers."

A “ready for reuse” determination provides, in a straightforward manner, specific information about a site, including the nature and extent of contamination, the cleanup work performed (if needed), and the status of the property with respect to state and federal requirements.

DEQ Secretary Mike McDaniel said, “This is a significant accomplishment and we are extremely pleased with the hard work by all parties involved to reach this precedent. We have made the ready for reuse program an integral part of our remediation process to achieve productive economic and environmental benefits.”

The 826-acre property has been in continuous operation since its original development in 1916 as an oil refining facility. It contains both oil refining and chemical production units. From 1997-99, Shell/Motiva performed an extensive, site-wide evaluation of potentially impacted soil and groundwater, including reviewing data from 92 environmental site assessments and groundwater data from many monitoring systems. The review resulted in a remedial strategy to address environmental impacts across the entire facility.

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Page 2 of 2

As a result of Shell/Motiva’s efforts to investigate and remediate the property, EPA and DEQ have concluded that the property is safe for commercial/industrial use.

“Motiva is proud to be the first refinery in the United States to receive this award, which highlights the work we’ve done to reduce our environmental footprint. This award shows that Motiva can accomplish great things when we get the right people within our organization working cooperatively with state and federal agencies,” Motiva Refinery Manager Keith Casey said. “For Motiva, reducing the company’s footprint means more than just putting groundwater monitoring systems and management programs in place, it requires a commitment by all our employees to be good environmental stewards, which is what being a good neighbor is all about.”

More information about the Shell/Motiva “ready for reuse” determination is available at <http://www.epa.gov/earth1r6/ready4reuse>.