



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs Region III

2443 Warrenville Road

Lisle IL 60532

Site: www.nrc.gov

Blog: <http://public-blog.nrc-gateway.gov>

No. III-12-010

Contact: Viktoria Mitlyng (630) 829-9662
Prema Chandrathil (630) 829-9663

March 28, 2012

E-Mail: OPA3@nrc.gov

NRC DETERMINES BRECKENRIDGE DISPOSAL SITE IN MICHIGAN IS SAFE FOR UNRESTRICTED PUBLIC USE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has concluded that the former Breckenridge Disposal Site in Breckenridge, Mich., is acceptable for unrestricted public use after determining it meets regulatory requirements for protecting public health and safety.

The site, a narrow, wedge-shaped parcel of land about 5,285 square meters in size, was used by the former Michigan Chemical Company to dispose of waste containing elevated levels of radioactive uranium and thorium generated during the processing of rare earth oxides. The company operated a chemical plant in nearby St. Louis, Mich., from 1967 through 1970. Its license from the Atomic Energy Commission was terminated in 1971, and the disposal site was declared suitable for public use.

Several years later, however, radiation levels above NRC limits were detected at the disposal site. Through ownership changes and a bankruptcy settlement with the U.S. government, title for the disposal site fell to a custodial trust established to remediate the property to meet NRC requirements. The trust and its contractor, EnergySolutions, completed remediation and submitted a final status survey report to the NRC in October 2011.

The NRC conducted 25 onsite inspections during remediation, as well as independent and confirmatory surveys. The agency staff's review of the remediation is contained in a Safety Evaluation Report available through the NRC's [ADAMS](#) online database using accession number ML12052A066, and is summarized in a *Federal Register* notice published on March 27.

Residual radioactivity at the disposal site is now below the limit of 25 millirem per year as specified in NRC regulations, giving reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by the unrestricted use of the site. This action ends NRC involvement with the disposal site unless new information is identified that would alter the agency's conclusion.

###

News releases are available through a free *listserv* subscription at the following Web address: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/listserver.html>. The NRC homepage at www.nrc.gov also offers a SUBSCRIBE link. E-mail notifications are sent to subscribers when news releases are posted to NRC's Web site.