

FORMER INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER SITE

Canton, IL
Assessment/Cleanup Grants

In Canton, a Storied Industrial Property is Rising from its own Ashes

ADDRESS:	260 E. Elm Street, Canton, IL 61520
PROPERTY SIZE:	33 acres, divided into 5 parcels
FORMER USE:	Heavy-duty farm equipment manufacturing, tire shredding and processing, mobile home scrap recovery, sandblasting, and other industrial operations
CURRENT USE:	Cleanup is in progress; the site's master plan calls for mixed-use, primarily commercial redevelopment
EPA GRANT RECIPIENT:	PROJECT PARTNERS:
The City of Canton has received \$1.3 million in EPA Brownfields grants. This includes \$500,000 in Assessment grant funding, \$200,000 in Supplemental Assistance grant funding, and \$600,000 in Cleanup grant funding.	Illinois EPA (IL EPA), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)



For additional data and geographic information for this and other Brownfields Grants, please visit EPA's:
Envirofacts - www.epa.gov/enviro/html/bms/bms_query.html
Enviromapper - www.epa.gov/enviro/bf

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

For more than a century, the International Harvester property served as the economic lifeblood of the City of Canton, Illinois. Located in the city's center, the 33-acre site was used to manufacture farm implements and equipment from 1850 through 1984. In a city of approximately 15,000 residents, the plant's closure eliminated nearly 3,000 jobs, leading to unemployment rates of more than 17 percent in the years following. The property was eventually sold to a tire recycling company that leased individual parcels for other industrial operators, until the recycling facility itself closed in 1993. The IL EPA ordered a removal action of more than 6,000 tons of tires and tire waste material in 1995, which proved to be an invaluable decision; two years later, an arsonist destroyed most of the facility in what was the biggest fire in Canton's history. Fulton County took ownership of the property in 1999, with the City of Canton named as the site's controlling trustee. That same year, the U.S. EPA started cleaning up the site under the Agency's Emergency Response Program—removing chemical containers, asbestos, charred brick and steel debris, and above- and underground storage tanks. A number of storage tanks were also removed by an International Harvester subsidiary company. U.S. EPA spent more than \$2 million on this emergency response, while the IL EPA provided an additional \$350,000. During this cleanup, a redevelopment specialty firm hired by the city helped Canton apply for funding under EPA's Brownfields Program, figuring the site a perfect fit. The city applied for and received a \$200,000 Brownfields Assessment grant in 1998—the first of what would eventually total \$1.3 million in Assessment and Cleanup grants under the Brownfields Program.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- A partnership between U.S. EPA and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) provided approximately \$75,000 to conduct an area-wide groundwater investigation.
- The city created a "Redevelopment Advisory Committee" comprised of local officials, community leaders, and business representatives to solicit input and establish public buy-in for the redevelopment process. The project enjoys widespread public support.
- To date, more than \$5 million in federal, state, and private funding has been leveraged for assessment and cleanup—including the removal of more than 2,000 chemical containers and 19,000 tons of contaminated material.

OUTCOME:

While cleanup of the former International Harvester site is in progress, one parcel has already received a draft "No Further Remediation" letter from the IL EPA; this letter will become finalized once a planned cap for the parcel is in place. A developer has committed to this parcel, with plans for commercial/retail uses that include a new restaurant. The City of Canton has approved an area-wide redevelopment plan in which planned retail, commercial, and cultural reuses of this centrally-located property will likely encourage further revitalization—while restoring community pride and appreciation for a property that played a key role in the area's history.



The former International Harvester site, following demolition of remaining structures.