

Developing Practical Land Revitalization Tools for Communities

GREEN DEMOLITION PRACTICES

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, EPA REGION 5



Detroit has almost 80,000 blighted structures and vacant residential lots, according to a report by the Detroit Blight Removal Task Force, representing almost a third of Detroit's housing stock. This scale of blighted buildings has significant environmental, social and economic impacts. EPA is working with partners to find ways to align federal resources to support the city's environmental and economic revitalization.

EPA Region 5 is assisting Detroit in updating its residential demolition bid specifications as the city ramps up its blight removal efforts. As a result of EPA's efforts, future residential building demolitions will better address backfill contamination, stormwater infiltration, asbestos, fugitive dust, materials recycling and deconstruction. This assistance is augmenting the federal response to the Detroit bankruptcy, including assistance from the U.S. Department of Treasury's Hardest Hit Fund. This work builds upon EPA Region 5's On the Road to Reuse: Residential demolition [bid specification development tool](#), which the Region created for use by cities, counties or land banks undertaking residential demolitions.



EPA Region 5 and the Detroit Land Bank are leading the effort to safely remove blight from the city's many residential properties with the goals of:

- Minimizing adverse environmental and health impacts.
- Promoting reuse of salvaged materials and the safe disposal of hazardous materials.
- Supporting compliance with asbestos regulations.
- Leaving sites in a condition suitable for redevelopment, including reuse for green infrastructure and urban agriculture.

The project team coordinated the March 4, 2014, *Demolition Best Practices Workshop*. At the Workshop, 80 residential demolition stakeholders focused discussions on ways to reasonably incorporate materials management, health and workforce development strategies in planned residential demolitions. The project team developed the Workshop Outcomes Report to inform demolition practices related to health and environmental impacts in advance of the \$52 million Hardest Hit Fund residential demolition program.

The Land Revitalization Team is also developing two tools—the Specification Assessment Review Tool and the Rapid Building Assessment Tool. The Specification Assessment Review Tool facilitates a self-assessment of demolition specifications developed by municipalities, land banks and other public landowners tasked with implementing residential demolition programs. The Rapid Building Assessment Tool allows property assessors to assess and inventory a building to determine the recommended course of action (e.g., rehabilitation candidate, extent of deconstruction, recycling opportunities or hazardous/unsafe (demolition only)). The Land Revitalization Team will incorporate these tools into the EPA Region 5 Residential Demolition Bid Specification Development Tool as a resource for other cities, municipalities and land banks.

For more information, please contact Jon Grosshans, EPA Region 5, grosshans.jon@epa.gov.



Figure 8: Vacant and blighted homes in Detroit, Michigan.

NEXT STEPS

- Finalize Demolition Specification Review Tool.
- Finalize Rapid Building Assessment Tool.