



At a Glance

Why We Did This Review

We conducted this review to determine whether the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) can provide documentation that imminent and substantial endangerment threats to public health at Superfund time-critical removal action sites have been addressed. The EPA's Superfund removal program responds to immediate threats to public health and the environment from releases of hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants. For example, in 2013, the EPA removed approximately 1,400 cubic yards of lead-contaminated soil and rock from 10 residential yards in Missouri due to immediate public health threats. Time-critical removal actions must be initiated in less than 6 months. EPA officials estimate that 300 Superfund removals are conducted every year, with an approximate \$100 million budget.

This report addresses the following EPA goal or cross-agency strategy:

- *Cleaning up communities and advancing sustainable development.*

Send all inquiries to our public affairs office at (202) 566-2391 or visit www.epa.gov/oig.

Listing of [OIG reports](#).

EPA Is Documenting How It Addresses Time-Critical Public Health Risks Under Its Superfund Authority

What We Found

We found that the EPA can provide documentation that imminent and substantial endangerment threats to public health at Superfund time-critical removal sites have been addressed. In a detailed review of three sites located in three separate EPA regions, we found that site removal records contained documentation to support EPA regions' conclusions that immediate threats to public health and the environment from releases of hazardous substances were addressed. Further, we surveyed all 10 EPA regions and found that regions were consistent in citing national guidance and regulations requiring documentation of time-critical removal actions. This provides added assurance that the practices in the three regions we tested are followed throughout EPA regions.

For more information on hazardous waste cleanups near you, visit the EPA's [Cleanups in My Community](#) webpage.

Time-critical removal actions are vital to public health protection. EPA documentation of work conducted at time-critical removal action sites provides assurance that imminent human and environmental health issues are addressed. Therefore, we make no recommendations.