



EPA TO CONDUCT REMOVAL ACTION AT A RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY ON UPPER MOUNTAIN ROAD LEWISTON, NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 2021



Current and Upcoming Activities

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will remove radioactive waste material from a residential property on Upper Mountain Road in Lewiston, New York in early September 2021.

EPA will remove contaminated soil from beneath the home, including a crawlspace, basement, and garage area, as well as from the outside yard area. EPA will transport and dispose of the contaminated material at a licensed facility for radioactive waste. EPA will replace the contaminated soil with topsoil and backfill that will be tested to ensure it complies with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) standards for topsoil and backfill. The work will take three to six months to complete. EPA is working in coordination with local and state officials including the Town of Lewiston, the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), and the NYSDEC.

EPA and contractors will follow COVID-19 precautions, as well as a health and safety plan. EPA will also monitor the air when the contamination is removed.

Past Activities

After recently learning of a 1980s Department of Energy report that the property contained radioactive material, the property owner contacted EPA. EPA conducted a comprehensive radiological survey, soil sampling, and radon testing at the property in August 2020 and determined the contamination was significant, resulting in radon getting into the home. As an immediate measure, EPA installed a radon mitigation system in the home to address the risks from indoor air. NYSDOH and NYSDEC reviewed EPA findings and in November 2020, asked EPA to take the lead on cleaning up the site.



Radioactive material

Radioactive material is hazardous because it emits radioactive particles, which if not properly managed, can be a risk to human health and the environment. Shipping radioactive material is highly regulated. The amount and type of radioactivity present in the shipment determines how it can be transported and what kind of controls are required.

Site Background

In the early to mid-20th century, nearby industrial and military production facilities generated byproducts and waste that contained radiological elements including uranium and thorium. In some instances, this material was considered cheap “fill” material and was used during construction activities throughout the area. Radioactive fill was used to level and grade this property before residential construction. The original source of the material is unknown and is the subject of an ongoing investigation.

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