



Brownfields 2004 Grant Fact Sheet

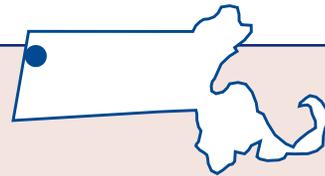
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, Berkshire County, MA

EPA Brownfields Program

EPA's Brownfields Program empowers states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic development to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. On January 11, 2002, the President signed into law the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act. Under the Brownfields Law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through four competitive grant programs: assessment grants, revolving loan fund grants, cleanup grants, and job training grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

Community Description

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission was selected to receive a brownfields assessment grant. In the late 1980s through early 1990s, Berkshire County (population 130,953) lost more than half of its manufacturing jobs (a loss of 11,716 jobs) due to the closure of Sprague Industries and more than 15 other private manufacturing companies, and the restructuring of General Electric. Manufacturing jobs have declined from 40 to 14 percent of the employment base. Berkshire County has the third highest poverty rate in Massachusetts. Unemployment rates in Berkshire County communities range from 7 to 11 percent. Only



Assessment Grant

**New
2004**

\$100,000 for petroleum

EPA has selected the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission for a brownfields assessment grant. Grant funds will be used to identify petroleum-contaminated brownfields, primarily among municipally owned sites throughout Berkshire County. The information will be added to a geographic information system for subsequent tracking. Once identified, a selected number of properties will undergo Phase I site assessments, and a smaller subset will have Phase II site assessments. A portion of the grants will be used for community involvement and to support a regional steering committee to coordinate among the various municipalities and communities.

Contacts

For further information, including specific grant contacts, additional grant information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at: www.epa.gov/brownfields.

EPA Region 1 Brownfields Team
617-918-1221

<http://www.epa.gov/region01/brownfields/>

Grant Recipient: Berkshire Regional Planning
Commission, MA
413-442-1521

The cooperative agreement for this grant has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.

17 percent of residents between 18 and 25 years old have a high school education. While the total land area of Berkshire County is quite large, only about one percent of the land area is available for new economic growth. Cleanup and redevelopment of nearly 100 known brownfields sites and other idle properties, particularly those within the area's developed inner core, are a focus of the county's economic development strategy.