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Solid Waste  
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Response (5105)

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[www.epa.gov/brownfields/](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/)



# EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

*Michigan City, IN*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, and safely clean up brownfields to promote their sustainable reuse. Brownfields are abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years, with additional funding provided for greenspace) to test assessment models and facilitate coordinated assessment and cleanup efforts at the federal, state, tribal, and local levels; and job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years) to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund program (each funded up to \$1,000,000 over five years) to provide financial assistance for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

## BACKGROUND

EPA has selected Michigan City for a Brownfields Assessment Pilot. The city also was selected to receive additional funding for assessments at brownfields properties to be used for greenspace purposes. Michigan City's location near Chicago on the southern shore of Lake Michigan has historically provided a stimulus for growth. The city prospered until the 1970s when factories closed, unemployment rose, and neighborhoods surrounding once-vibrant industries began to erode. Michigan City (population 32,752) has chosen two aging and abandoned industrial facilities (Schmook Oil and Royal Metal) in its Urban Enterprise Zone as Pilot targets. Both properties are surrounded by single-family homes. Residents in the Pilot areas (population 10,114) have an unemployment rate of 10 percent, and poverty rates up to 22 percent.

Contamination is known or suspected at both sites in neighborhoods already impacted economically and socially. The one-acre Schmook Oil facility was originally used for sheetrock manufacturing and later as an industrial equipment supply warehouse. When an oil leak was discovered on the property in 1999,

## PILOT SNAPSHOT



*Michigan City, Indiana*

**Date of Announcement:**  
April 2001

**Amount:** \$200,000

**Greenspace:** \$50,000

**Profile:** The Pilot targets two abandoned industrial facilities surrounded by single-family homes in an Urban Enterprise Zone of the city.

### Contacts:

Michigan City  
(219) 873-1211

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 5  
(312) 886-7576

Visit the EPA Region 5 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:

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

soil contaminated by the leak was removed, as well as oil drums and tanks. Other kinds of contamination remain. The five-acre Royal Metal facility, which produced office furniture, is in disrepair, and the city has had to condemn collapsed buildings on the site. If contamination can be addressed at the sites, both of which are served by good infrastructures, they have potential for rehabilitation in an area that needs an economic boost.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The city's overall objective is to clean up and reuse the Schmock Oil and Royal Metal facilities in the Urban Enterprise Zone. The city plans to acquire these facilities through condemnation and foreclosure on property tax issues. Pilot funds will be used to perform assessments at the two sites and determine a cleanup strategy and reuse plan. Neighborhood groups will be established to monitor and participate in the process beginning with the initial site assessments.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Conducting Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments of the Schmock Oil and Royal Metal facilities;
- Developing a cleanup and reuse plan that includes cleanup costs and sources of cleanup funds; and
- Involving community groups during the entire process.

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