



# Technical Assistance Services for Communities

## Rolling Knolls Landfill Superfund Site Fact Sheet – April 2019

### Superfund Basics for Rolling Knolls Landfill

The Rolling Knolls Landfill site is in Chatham, New Jersey. Part of the landfill is in the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. See Figure 1. The approximately 170-acre area was used as an unlined landfill for about 30 years. The privately-owned landfill closed in 1968. It received solid waste from various parties. This waste included household garbage, construction and demolition debris, industrial waste, septic waste and scrap metal. Media being investigated include soil, sediment, surface water and groundwater. Site contaminants are metals, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Rolling Knolls Landfill was listed on the Superfund National Priorities List (NPL) in September 2003. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is investigating the site and will issue a cleanup plan.

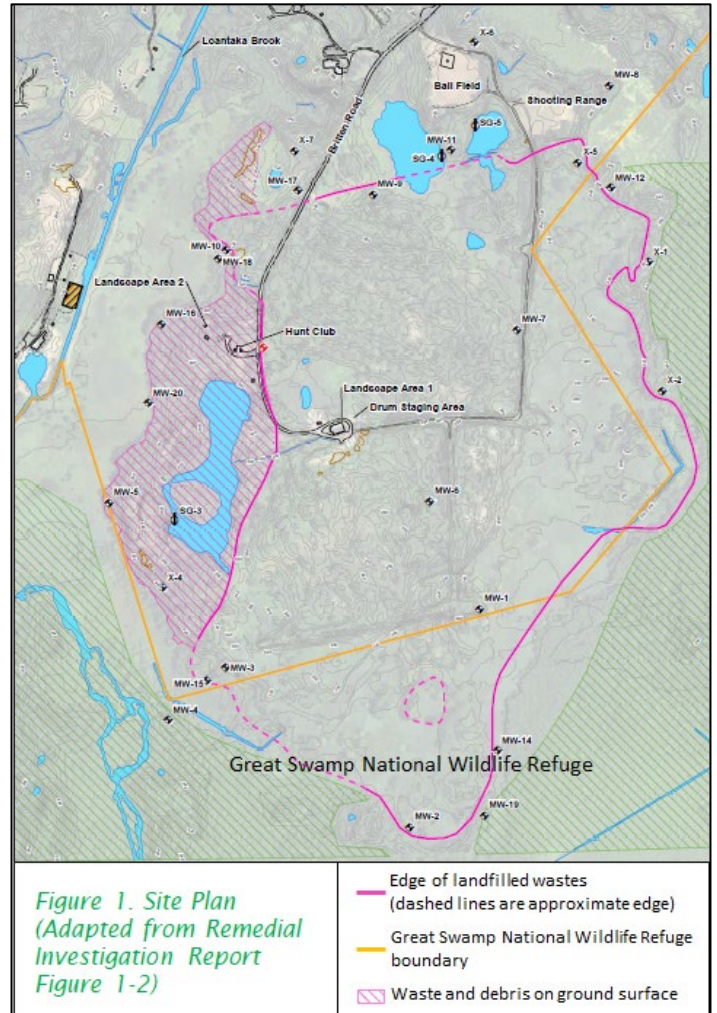
This fact sheet covers Superfund basics, including:

- The Superfund process.
- EPA's responsibilities.
- The community's role.

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#### The Superfund Process

Superfund is the common name for the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA). The program's name refers to the "super fund" of



money that was set aside to clean up hazardous waste sites when it was established in 1980.

Figure 2 shows the Superfund remedial process. The process has five major stages:

1. Assessment.
2. Characterization.
3. Selection of remedy.
4. Cleanup.
5. Post-construction.

## THE SUPERFUND REMEDIAL PROCESS

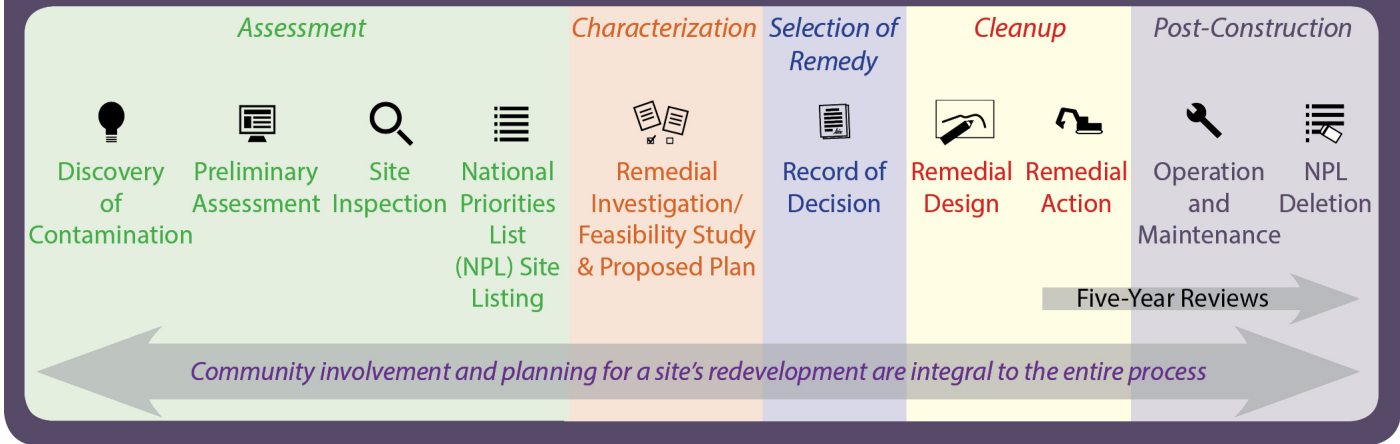


Figure 2. The Superfund Remedial Process

**Assessment.** Assessment begins with discovery of contamination, a preliminary assessment and site inspection (PA/SI). If the site warrants further investigation, EPA may propose listing it on the NPL. EPA proposed the site to the NPL in April 2003. After receiving comments, EPA listed the site on the NPL in September 2003. A public comment period is required before a site is listed on the NPL.

**Characterization.** The characterization stage includes the remedial investigation and feasibility study (RI/FS). The RI determines the nature and extent of contamination at a site. The RI for Rolling Knolls Landfill finished in 2018. The FS evaluates treatment technologies. The FS is currently being prepared for the site. Following the FS, EPA selects a preferred remedy and presents this remedy in a document called the Proposed Plan. EPA solicits comments on the Proposed Plan.

**Selection of Remedy.** After receiving comments on the Proposed Plan, EPA selects a remedy for the site in a decision document called a Record of Decision (ROD).

**Cleanup.** After the ROD, the cleanup stage begins. Detailed cleanup plans are developed during the remedial design. Remedial action includes the physical cleanup activities to put the remedial design in place.

**Post-Construction.** When physical cleanup activities at a site have finished, the site is in the post-

construction stage. Activities during this stage help make sure that a site's remedy continues to protect human health and the environment over time. Post-construction work can include:

- Operation and maintenance of the remedy, such as repairing a landfill cap or operating a groundwater treatment system.
- Routine monitoring.
- Regular reviews to make sure the cleanup continues to be effective.
- Enforcement of any long-term site restrictions, such as institutional controls to prevent residential use of a site or use of contaminated groundwater.

When contamination remains on site above levels that allow for unlimited use and unrestricted exposure, a Five-Year Review is required every five years. This is to make sure the remedy remains protective of human health and the environment. Monitoring at the site may occur more frequently.

### CERCLA Hazardous Substances

There are about 1,200 listed hazardous substances under CERCLA. These include:

- Resource, Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)-defined hazardous wastes.
- Hazards and toxics defined by the:
  - Clean Air Act (CAA).
  - Clean Water Act (CWA).
  - Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA).

Once cleanup goals have been met and no further cleanup action is needed to protect human health and the environment, EPA may delete a site from the NPL. Public comments are solicited before NPL delisting. Even after a site is deleted, Five-Year Reviews can continue depending upon remaining contaminant levels.

Reuse of a site or a part of a site can happen at any time during the Superfund process if human health and the environment are protected.

### ***EPA's Responsibilities***

The goals of Superfund are to:

- Protect human health and the environment by cleaning up sites contaminated with hazardous substances.
- Make responsible parties pay for cleanup work.
- Involve communities in the Superfund process.
- Support the return of Superfund sites to productive use.

### **Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)**

EPA is required to try to make the responsible party or parties pay for Superfund activities. When a contaminated site is discovered, EPA begins trying to identify the generators and transporters of the hazardous waste and the owners and operators of the site. Those identified are considered PRPs under Superfund. PRPs are asked to conduct and/or pay for cleanup studies and activities. If the PRPs refuses to participate, EPA can clean up the site and sue the party or parties to recover costs.

### **Role of States, Tribes and Local Governments**

Superfund requires EPA to coordinate with states and tribes when the federal government leads cleanup operations, and allows states, tribes and local governments to lead cleanup efforts using Superfund money if they have the necessary technical and management expertise.

### **Community Engagement**

EPA must do certain community engagement activities for Superfund sites, including:

- Providing the public with an opportunity to comment when EPA proposes adding a site to the NPL.
- Conducting community interviews and developing a Community Involvement Plan.
- Notifying the public when a site qualifies for a technical assistance grant.
- Providing the public with an opportunity to comment on the Proposed Plan in writing or in person, and hosting a public meeting to discuss the plan.
- Providing a “responsiveness summary” of the written and oral comments the public has made on the Proposed Plan and EPA’s responses to those comments.
- Notifying the community and other interested parties when a Five-Year Review will be conducted at a site.
- Providing the public with an opportunity to comment when EPA intends to delete a site from the NPL.

In addition to required actions, EPA’s community engagement activities may include fact sheets, public meetings and other outreach activities to keep the public informed about progress and work at a site. During cleanup, the community may want information about planned work hours, truck traffic, and health and safety precautions.

### ***The Community's Role***

When people living near a Superfund site are involved in the Superfund process, the outcome is better for everyone. People often have important information that helps EPA with decision-making.

EPA’s goals for community involvement include:

- Keep communities informed of site activities.
- Provide opportunities for public comment.
- Address community issues.
- Improve environmental education.
- Provide training opportunities.
- Create partnerships.

People can get involved by:

- Attending site-related public meetings.
- Participating in the site's Community Advisory Group (CAG).
- Asking questions and providing input to EPA.
- Submitting comments during formal public comment periods.

• Reading site-related information:

- Online at [www.epa.gov/superfund/rolling-knolls](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/rolling-knolls).
- At the Library of the Chathams  
214 Main Street  
Chatham, NJ 07928

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