

General Motors (Central Foundry Division) Superfund Site, Massena, NY

St. Lawrence River Bottom Cap Inspection

Recent fish sampling at the General Motors (Central Foundry Division) Superfund site (GM) has shown that there continues to be elevated levels of PCBs in fish. As a result, the EPA is developing a multi-phased approach to evaluate the current environmental conditions in the St. Lawrence River adjacent to the GM site. The first step in the process is a diver-assisted inspection of the underwater stone and gravel cap which was placed in one area of the St. Lawrence River system and is designed to isolate residual contaminated sediment that could not be dredged from the river.

When and how will the inspection be performed?

On Monday, June 19, the EPA will mobilize a boat and four divers to the St. Lawrence River near the GM site. The inspection team includes the EPA and U.S. Fish & Wildlife experts and skilled divers. Diving is expected to begin late on Monday and continue through the end of the week. Divers will follow north - south transects, set 25 feet apart to view the entire 300-foot x 250-foot cap.

What is the focus of the inspections?

The main focus of the inspection will be to evaluate the integrity of the multilayer sediment cap in the St. Lawrence River. Divers will also investigate an area adjacent to a sheet pile wall near the GM side of Turtle Cove, where fish sampling has been conducted in the past and where fish were also found to be contaminated. The divers will be looking for any deficiencies in the armor stone of the cap, areas of sediment accumulation, and will generally be observing habitat and underwater plant and wildlife populations.

Will any additional sampling or studies be performed?

This cap inspection will be followed by additional sampling, including fish sampling, in late summer in the waters adjacent to the GM site, as well as downstream in Tribal waters.

Is it safe to eat fish from the St. Lawrence River and other nearby waterways?

The EPA recommends that all residents be aware of and follow the fish consumption advisories established by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH).

More information about the NYSDOH fish advisories for the St. Lawrence Valley Region is available at

https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/health_advisories/regional/st_lawrence.htm.

The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe also has established Fish and Game Advisories. More information is available at <http://www.srmtenv.org/index.php?spec=waterresources/2014/11/2014-Fish-Advisories>.

About the General Motors (Central Foundry Division) Superfund Site

The GM site is located in Massena, New York. Akwesasne, the Mohawk territory of the federally recognized Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe, lies just east of Massena and is located adjacent to the site and downstream along the St. Lawrence River. After the GM bankruptcy, ownership of the site was transferred to the Revitalizing Auto Communities Environmental Response (RACER) Trust.

The cleanup of the GM site is ongoing, but is nearing completion. The St. Lawrence River, Turtle Cove and Raquette River system sediments have been dredged to remove PCB-contaminated sediments. Site soil has been remediated with the exception of the 10 million-gallon lagoon and associated soil. Removal of contaminated soil and sediment on St. Regis Mohawk Tribal properties is partially completed. The groundwater collection system has been installed and the groundwater treatment system is currently being designed. The Industrial Landfill has been capped and a 150-foot buffer has been created between the landfill and the St. Lawrence River and Tribal property. The manufacturing facility has been demolished and associated contaminated soil has been removed. The site will be restored with a seeded soil cap; the placement of this cap will begin in 2017.

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