

# Brownfields BULLETIN

City of Phoenix Brownfields Land Recycling Program

Vol. 7 July 2001

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## **Brownfields legislation passed!**

Bill HB2432, Delinquent Property Tax Reduction Contamination was passed unanimously by the Arizona House and Senate and signed into law by Gov. Jane Hull in the 45th Legislature. The bill was sponsored by House Rep. Leah Landrum and was the result of a collaborative effort between cities and counties to create an incentive to help cleanup and redevelop brownfields in Arizona. The bill allows County Board of Supervisors to reduce the lien for delinquent taxes, interest, costs and penalties on properties that are substantially contaminated with hazardous substances or petroleum in an amount not to exceed the actual expenses to mitigate environmental conditions at the property.

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## Other city services available to brownfields projects

### Community and Economic Development department

The city of Phoenix Small Business Assistance Program was created to promote and support this important segment of our community. Some of the programs offered through the office are:

- **First Point Information Center/Small Business Hotline:** 602-534-6000.
- **Resource directory:** A comprehensive list of traditional and non-traditional lending institutions, technical assistance providers, and bonding and insurance companies.
- **Financial assistance:** This includes the city of Phoenix Expansion Assistance and Development Program, Chicanos Por La Causa microloan programs, Self-Employment Loan Fund and referrals to other financial programs and lenders.
- **Management technical consulting/assistance**
- **Seminars and training classes**
- **Enterprise Community business matters program:**

The program targets businesses located within the Enterprise Community, a 20-square-mile area in central Phoenix, by providing services that include general business plan and marketing plan development, financing and loan packaging, technology needs assessments, New Economy business assessments, and workforce development and human resource planning.



For further information about these and other economic development programs, call 602-262-5040 or visit [phoenix.gov/ECONDEV](http://phoenix.gov/ECONDEV) on the Internet.

### Neighborhood Services department

The Neighborhood Services Department's mission is to preserve and improve the physical, social and economic health of Phoenix neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Economic Development division undertakes activities that stimulate commercial and retail development, create jobs and strengthen the economic stability of neighborhoods. Business assistance is provided for land assembly, commercial façade improvements, and infrastructure and streetscape enhancements, while technical assistance is available to business owners.

For further information, call 602-495-5249 or visit [phoenix.gov/NSD](http://phoenix.gov/NSD) on the Internet.

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## City's #1 priority brownfields site is making progress!



The East Washington Fluff site, located at 443 E. Buckeye Road in Phoenix, has been a problem for neighboring residents, the city of Phoenix and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) for many years. The city, through the Brownfields Land Recycling Program, has been working with the ADEQ, U.S. Environmental Protection

Agency, Maricopa County and the private sector to facilitate assessment, cleanup and redevelopment of the site.

View of 18'-20' pile of auto shredder fluff.

Because of the risk to the public from the contamination at the site, the ADEQ is conducting an Early Response Action to remove and dispose of the piles of auto shredder fluff and other solid waste on the surface of the property. Once the fluff piles are removed, clean fill and gravel will be brought onto the site to cover the entire area. The clean fill will create a protective cap 12 inches thick, which will prevent exposure to any remaining contaminated soils.

These activities currently are taking place and should be completed by August. A final cleanup remedy for the site will be developed once additional studies are completed and cleanup goals are developed. This project is being funded and managed by the Water Quality Assurance Revolving Fund (WQARF) program.

## ***Background***

The 10-acre site formerly was occupied by automotive shredder and metal salvage facilities. It has remained vacant since 1986 when the owner abandoned the property. Concerns have ranged from general blight, use of the site by transients, criminal activities on site and risk from contaminants. The property, fenced since 1997, also is burdened with delinquent property taxes.

## ***Environmental Status***

Lead, cadmium and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are the primary contaminants found in the auto shredder fluff. The fluff is mixed with native soils throughout the property from the ground surface to an average depth of nine feet below ground surface.

Most of the property is covered with metal debris and other fragments mixed with native soils, with several large piles of auto shredder fluff located on the southeastern portion of the site. The site also contains underground storage tanks. Groundwater monitoring wells were installed on the site and groundwater samples showed no contamination above regulatory levels.

## ***Risk Assessment***

The city requested the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) perform a Public Health Consultation. The report, released in December 2000, concluded that "a public health hazard may exist when the fence is breached and direct contact with soils at the site occurs." ADEQ's activities are being conducted in response to the findings of ADHS.

## ***Project Office***

ADEQ has opened a Project Office at 424 E. Buckeye Road to provide information to citizens and to allow ADEQ to closely supervise the project. The office hours are 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Monday through Friday, 602-716-5900. English- and Spanish-speaking ADEQ staff are available to answer questions from the public.

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### **Program activities**

#### ***Brownfields Program Begins Second Year of City Funding!***

The city's fiscal year begins July 1, 2001. Funding for the program includes \$110,000 in grants for the private sector for public infrastructure improvements and development fees.

#### ***Brownfields Bond Program***

City staff are preparing strategies for implementing this \$3.4 million program focused on providing environmental investigation and cleanup in support of other city bond projects.

#### ***Brownfields Element in City's Draft General Plan***

The General Plan is undergoing an update. Policies and recommendations for brownfields redevelopment have been included as part of the Environmental Element.

The plan will be updated and presented to voters after comments have been collected and the City Council has approved the final document. The community-input period has been extended through July. A Planning Commission public hearing will be at 7 p.m. July 25, Phoenix City Council Chambers, 200 W. Jefferson St.

To learn more about the General Plan or to provide comments, contact the Planning Department at 602-262-6364, visit [phoenix.gov](http://phoenix.gov) on the Internet and click on "General Plan Update" or send electronic mail to [joy.mee@phoenix.gov](mailto:joy.mee@phoenix.gov)

#### ***Phoenix to Mentor El Paso, Texas***

The International City/County Manager's Association (ICMA) again has chosen Phoenix Brownfields staff to participate in their Brownfields Peer Exchange Program for 2001. Phoenix was a mentor to Austin, Texas in 1999. This year's program will bring together Phoenix and Austin as mentors to the newly formed El Paso brownfields program. City staff will visit El Paso this summer to exchange information. Lessons learned from this program will be documented in a report prepared by ICMA.



#### ***ADEQ Seminar Helps Lenders Learn about Brownfields Redevelopment***

Approximately 50 consultants, bankers and developers learned about how to remediate, market and develop environmentally contaminated properties at a Lenders' Day seminar that the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) hosted in Phoenix on May 23. Experts from government agencies, academia and the private sector joined ADEQ's Underground Storage Tanks Unit and Voluntary Remediation Program (VRP) in presenting information during the day-long event.

ADEQ staff summarized the new VRP statute and fee rule that became effective Feb. 9, 2001.

The VRP provides state oversight for cleanups and issues "No Further Action" letters for successfully remediated sites. The program administers grants, loans and federal tax incentive eligibility certifications to help assess and clean up brownfields sites.

Other topics concerning brownfields redevelopment addressed prospective purchaser agreements, SBA lending tools, environmental requirements, and the real estate market. ADEQ organizers received positive feedback and suggestions for future events.

"Lenders' Day is an excellent opportunity for people who are interested in redeveloping contaminated properties to access current information, share ideas and talk with administrators who can offer tangible advice. We look forward to the next seminar and hope attendance will continue to grow," said ADEQ VRP Manager Catherine Chaberski. To learn more about the VRP, call 602-207-4398.

***The Brownfields Federal Tax Incentive is available through Dec. 31, 2004.***

Previous geographic restrictions have been eliminated. This tax incentive allows taxpayers to immediately reduce their taxable income by the cost of their eligible cleanup expenses.

This incentive creates an immediate tax advantage from these expenses. For more information, visit EPA's Web site at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov).

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## Brownfields news from across the country

- **In April, U.S. EPA Administrator Christie Whitman announced the award of \$38 million** to 90 communities across the country for brownfields assessment and cleanup. This funding initiative includes provisions for the evaluation, protection and preservation of "greenspace."  
Since its inception in 1993, the EPA brownfields program has provided more than \$162 million in grants with \$2.9 billion leveraged and more than 11,000 jobs created.
- **The "Brownfields Revitalization and Environmental Restoration Act of 2001" (S.350)** was overwhelmingly approved by the U.S. Senate on April 25, 2001. The Act is designed to strengthen efforts to reclaim hundreds of thousands of contaminated and abandoned industrial sites. The legislation would provide \$1 billion over the next five years and increase annual spending for the cleanup program from \$92 million to \$200 million. It would protect developers who buy brownfields from EPA lawsuits and Superfund penalties for pollution caused by previous owners.
- **EPA Region 9 has selected the State of California as a USTFields pilot recipient.** California will choose USTs in the city of Oakland to benefit from USTFields funding of up to \$100,000.

- **A New Report Highlights Links Between Brownfields and Transportation and is available on the Internet.** "Redeveloping Brownfields with Federal Transportation Funds," produced by the EPA and the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO), is intended to assist developers, transportation planners, economic development professionals, policy analysts, and others interested in achieving better transportation, environmental, and community outcomes. To download the report: [www.smartgrowth.org/library/brownfieldtea21.html](http://www.smartgrowth.org/library/brownfieldtea21.html)
- **EPA has established the Brownfields Technology Support Center** to provide expertise and information necessary to help Brownfields decision-makers determine whether innovative options are available and feasible for their sites. The support center is located on the Internet at: [www.brownfieldstsc.org](http://www.brownfieldstsc.org).
- Brownfields 2001 National Conference, Sept. 24-26, Chicago, Illinois. View the agenda, register or make hotel arrangements at: [www.brownfields2001.org](http://www.brownfields2001.org).

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## For more information

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Phoenix Brownfields Land Recycling program Web site:  
[www.phoenix.gov/ENVPGM/brownfld.html](http://www.phoenix.gov/ENVPGM/brownfld.html)



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