

Energize-ECI Regional Planning District Brownfield Assessment Coalition FAQ's

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has selected Energize-ECI Regional Planning District (EECIRPD) for a brownfields assessment coalition grant. The District's coalition partners include Blackford, Delaware, Grant and Jay Counties. Community-wide hazardous substances grant funds (\$358,500) will be used to conduct 12 Phase I and eight Phase II environmental site assessments. Petroleum grant funds (\$250,000) will be used to conduct 10 Phase I and six Phase II environmental site assessments. Grant funds also will be used to develop an inventory of brownfield sites throughout the coalition area and conduct community outreach and cleanup planning activities. The initiative will be led by EECIRPD staff and conducted through September 2014.

1. **What is a Brownfield?** A brownfield is a property that is difficult to develop because it is contaminated or believed to be contaminated. The US EPA defines a brownfield as 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. Contaminants can include asbestos, lead paint, as well as sites contaminated by controlled substances (meth-lab residuals). The majority of identified brownfields contain low to moderate levels of contamination.
2. **Why the interest in redeveloping brownfields?** When brownfields sit idle, everybody loses. Neighbors face environmental worries and reduced property values. Cities see roads, sewers, and other infrastructure underused. New business seeks out "greenfields" or undeveloped land, encouraging sprawl. And, brownfield owners must deal with a long list of worries – from potential lawsuits to deriving too little income from their property.
3. **What are examples of brownfields in our community?** Former gas stations, oil storage facilities and dry cleaners; abandoned or under-utilized manufacturing/industrial facilities; former schools, apartments, and hospitals; and, real estate that just "sits on the market" and doesn't sell year after year. Residential properties (other than those used for commercial purposes) are not typically identified as brownfields.
4. **What are Phase I assessments?** Phase I environmental site assessments are conducted to learn about a property's past use, environmental conditions at the property and adjacent sites, and possible presence of hazardous substances. Phase I studies do not include sampling of soils, groundwater, or building materials.
5. **What are Phase II assessments?** If the Phase I assessment study indicates the potential for recognized environmental conditions at a property, then a Phase II study may be conducted to determine if contamination exists on-site. Phase II investigations can include sampling of soils, groundwater, and building materials on-site. If contamination is identified, then additional Phase II studies may be conducted to determine how much contamination exists at the site. Once the contamination is delineated on-site, a clean-up plan may be developed for the site.

Contacts

For further information, please contact Pam Price, Program Development Coordinator, Energize-ECI Regional Planning District at 765.254.0116, or pprice@energize-ecirpd.org or visit our website at <http://www.eci-brownfields.org/>. For further information about EECIRPD, visit our website at <http://energize-ecirpd.org/>.