



PAW PAW LAUNDRY ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSE

Fact Sheet

Historical

The Paw Paw Laundry facility operated as a laundry and dry cleaners from the early 1950s until 2006. During its operation, the dry cleaning service used a chemical called tetrachloroethylene to clean clothes. Historic spilling of this chemical resulted in it getting into the soil and groundwater on the property. The laundry facility also used an underground storage tank to store gasoline that was used to fuel delivery trucks. Gasoline from the tank also leaked into the soil and groundwater.

In 2016, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) began a study to determine the extent of the soil and groundwater impacts caused by the former dry cleaning facility. The MDEQ has completed its study on the property and is now proceeding with activities to address the onsite impacts. Working with the current property owner and a potential developer for the property, the MDEQ is planning a limited cleanup to address impacts that remain in the soil and groundwater.



Photo by David Harn

Working with the current property owner and a potential developer for the property, the MDEQ is planning a limited cleanup to address impacts that remain in the soil and groundwater.

What's the Plan?

The MDEQ has determined that demolition of a portion of the existing building and removal of the most impacted soils offers the best option for reducing potential risks at the property. This will involve many steps, including:

- **Removing a Portion of the Building** – The most highly-impacted soils are located under the northern 1/3 of the existing building. In order for the impacted soils to be removed, the MDEQ will demolish a portion of the building.
- **Lowering the Groundwater Table** – The depth below the ground where the soil is completely saturated with water is known as the water table. The water table near the Paw Paw Laundry site is about 10 feet below the ground surface. Because some of the impacted soil is located at or slightly beneath the water table surface, the water table will be lowered to allow for removal of this soil. This is known as dewatering an excavation.
- **Disposal of the Impacted Groundwater** – Water removed from the excavation during the dewatering process will be contained in large steel tanks, known as frac tanks. The water in the frac tanks will be removed on a regular basis and transported to a treatment facility for proper disposal.
- **Removal of Impacted Soil** – Excavators will be used to load soil into trucks that will transport it to a licensed landfill for disposal. It is estimated that approximately 4,000 tons of soil will be removed for disposal.
- **Site Restoration** – Clean sand will be brought in to fill the excavation and restore the site to its original grade.

Schedule

During the winter of 2017, the MDEQ obtained a construction contractor to complete the work. Work on the site will likely begin in June 2017 and is expected to be complete by the middle of August 2017.

MDEQ Contact

David Harn, Project Manager
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
Kalamazoo District Office
269.567.3526 | harnd@michigan.gov

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