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<https://response.epa.gov/CharlestownMallFire>

## Current and Upcoming Activities

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is initiating actions at the Charlestown Mall site located in the city of Utica and town of Frankfort, New York, to reduce the potential threat associated with the presence of asbestos at the site.

EPA will secure the site by installing a chain link fence and other physical barriers to prevent unauthorized access. Signs will be posted to warn the public of the hazards associated with the site, and EPA will perform visual inspections of the site and air monitoring in and around the perimeter of the site to determine if additional interim measures need to be taken. EPA is currently exploring demolition strategies for the building structures and recycling options for the building materials.

After the assessment is performed, EPA will facilitate the development of workplans to address the asbestos at the site. Initial response activities are expected to be completed within approximately six weeks and will resume in spring 2021. Additional updates will be provided as plans are developed.

## Past Activities

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) referred the Charlestown Mall site to EPA in 2008 after unpermitted demolition that had caused a release of asbestos to the environment was discovered.

An assessment of the site conducted in 2008 and 2009 confirmed the presence of asbestos-contaminated debris, polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contamination from leaking transformers, and abandoned drums in the former boiler house.

A time-critical removal action was conducted from 2010-2011 that addressed nearly 16,000 tons of asbestos-contaminated demolition debris, PCBs contaminated debris and soil, as well as abandoned drums containing ignitable, corrosive and toxic liquids.

## Site Background

The Charlestown Mall site, located at 311 Turner Street, Utica, New York and 2205 Bleeker Street, Frankfort, New York, is the location of a former manufacturing facility that was built by Savage Arms Company in the late 1890's before being sold to Sperry Univac in the 1950's. In 1976, the facility was sold and a portion of it was redeveloped into the Charlestown Outlet Complex which operated later as the Charlestown Business Complex into the early 2000s. Over the years, a series of buildings at the site were not properly maintained and became extremely deteriorated.

On the morning of August 27, 2020, local fire departments responded to a fire at the site that spread quickly through much of the facility. The fire resulted in the partial collapse of four of the seven remaining structures while six of the seven were damaged in the fire. Asbestos that was not addressed as part of the previous EPA cleanup is believed to be present in these remaining structures.

In September 2020, NYSDEC formally requested that EPA perform a removal assessment at the site because of the potential threat posed by the presence of asbestos in building remnants.