

U.S. EPA is Cleaning Up Former Plating Site

Specified Plating Co.
Chicago, Illinois

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For more information

If you have questions or comments,
please contact:

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response.epa.gov/SpecifiedPlatingSite



Location of the Specified Plating site, 320 N Harding Avenue.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is removing hazardous liquids and debris and dismantling contaminated processing equipment at the Specified Plating Co. site. The site is located at 320 N. Harding Ave., in Chicago. The contaminants of concern include chromium, cyanide, and sulfuric acid. Although these contaminants are contained within the buildings, the structure is in poor condition and exposure could pose a threat to public health.

Clean up began November 28, 2022 and may take 12-14 weeks to complete. Crews will dispose of all hazardous material off-site. Measures will be in place to ensure the work is done safely and doesn't affect surrounding businesses and residents.

What is chromium and how does it pose a risk to people?

Chromium is a naturally occurring element found in rocks, animals, plants and soil. This element is also widely used in manufacturing processes, often as the compound hexavalent chromium, or chromium VI. Specified Plating Co. used chromium VI to coat metal parts, also known as electroplating.

Chromium VI can be released into the air, water or soil, and cause a variety of health problems. The U.S. EPA and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have determined chromium VI as carcinogenic to humans.

For more information about chromium and its related health risks, visit:
<https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/PHS/PHS.aspx?phsid=60&toxid=17>

Work site safety

Contractors are performing the cleanup under U.S. EPA direction and oversight. They are taking steps to protect the health and safety of residents and workers.

Access to the worksite is limited by front entry gates. As work proceeds within and around the property, control and decontamination areas will be set up for workers, materials and equipment leaving the site. Additionally, residents may see workers wearing protective suits and gear.

U.S. EPA is conducting daily air monitoring for worker and public health and safety. Watering and other control measures will be used to control for airborne dust.

There will be some noise from the use of equipment, but work will be limited to Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.



Totes containing zinc plating solution

What was previously done at the site?

After the site closed in 2019, the operator cleaned up some areas of the site, including consolidating debris and unused chemicals. In 2020, U.S. EPA completed a removal assessment and found open vats of hazardous material. In response, the Agency recommended an emergency cleanup.

What is being done to clean up the site?

Currently, U.S. EPA and the City of Chicago are coordinating site cleanup. After removing all hazardous liquid and debris, workers will transport the waste to an approved off-site disposal facility. Then, contaminated processing equipment, vats, piping, and building components will be decontaminated or dismantled.

Site background

Specified Plating Co. began operations in 1945, as a zinc electroplating and powder coating facility. In October of 2019, site operations stopped because of numerous violations from the Chicago Fire and Building Departments, noting improper chemical storage and general facility disrepair. When active, the 16,850 square foot site operated up to three plating lines, a powder coating line, and a wastewater treatment facility.



Picture of plating line with cyanide, caustic and acid vats.