

Public Participation is essential to the success of EPA's community involvement program. If you have any questions, please contact:

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## Introduction

On October 14, 2018, the Tonawanda Coke Corporation (TCC) located at 3875 River Road, Tonawanda, Erie County, New York suspended operations and initiated process shutdown to permanently close its facility. TCC, a coke manufacturing plant, occupied a 160-acre footprint in an industrial area in Tonawanda, NY where they had operated since 1978 and that was operated by other companies for a period of decades before that. Coke is a fuel made by heating coal at high temperatures in the absence of air.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) lead the effort to oversee the safe shutdown of operations which consisted of 60 ovens, 30 of which still remained in operation. In October, the last remaining ovens were fully emptied and purged of gases, marking the end of coke production at the facility. The NYSDEC turned the lead over to EPA to conduct a full assessment of the facility to determine near term actions that may need to be taken to address risks posed by the facility.

## Shutdown Activities

EPA closely assisted NYSDEC in its oversight of facility shutdown activities through air monitoring. For the last decade, the facility violated numerous state and federal regulations that negatively affected the community. TCC permanently vacated the site in late October. EPA conducted air sampling, monitoring and surveillance until the facility shutdown and all flammable gases were purged from the system. Laboratory analyses were performed, and EPA concluded that air levels established to protect the public were not exceeded.

## EPA Initial Assessment

EPA is now conducting an assessment of the facility. Some potential risks identified at the facility include flammable or potentially explosive substances stored onsite, hazardous substances discharged onto the soil, and improperly stored acids and solvents.

EPA has collected samples of contaminated media for analysis. Agency contractors have been excavating contaminated soil and collecting sludge-like material, which will be properly disposed of once necessary analysis is completed. EPA has also been running systems to treat process water generated from operations at the facility and collect storm water.

EPA's work at the facility is expected to continue over many months because of the size and complexity of the facility. Engagement will include continuing with sampling to determine areas in need of cleanup work, including excavation and removal of contaminated soil and liquids. EPA will also continue to keep the facility secure, maintain necessary systems, and take steps to winterize equipment and pipes.

For more information, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/ny/tonawanda-coke-corporation-tcc-site>



In May 2017, EPA established a task force to restore the Superfund program to its rightful place at the center of the Agency's core mission to protect health and the environment.

[epa.gov/superfund/superfund-task-force](https://epa.gov/superfund/superfund-task-force)