

## **AWARD-WINNING BROWNFIELD PROJECT**

### **McMinnville School District**



#### **The Story**

The property housed asphalt plant operations (1960s through the mid-1990s), briefly operated as a concrete-batch plant, and was a public dump site, parking lot and repair shop for long-haul trucks (from the late 1990s through 2003). The site had been listed in the EPA Brownfields program.

This site had been abandoned for many years and had become a dumping ground for refuse. It was an ugly blight on the neighborhood and a safety issue. Through the guidance of the School District, a variety of interested parties were variously assembled to tackle these problems with the final goal of creating an appropriate site for a new elementary school.

#### **The Challenge**

Legacy contamination from an abandoned asphalt plant adjacent to the school district's site for a new school building was preventing the school's construction. The asphalt-plant parcel needed to be redeveloped as a parking lot and stormwater retention pond for the new school.

#### **How We Helped**

- Conducted a site investigation and determined that contamination from an adjacent parcel (a former asphalt plant) had impacted the school district's property right where it wanted to place a stormwater retention pond and parking lot.
- Identified the property's contaminated areas and calculated contamination risks to future students, staff, and the environment.
- Developed a remediation method with DEQ oversight to ensure the safety of building occupants and the environment.
- Oversaw removal of contaminated soils and the construction of a cap (a parking lot) to prevent students and staff from contacting any residual contaminated soils.
- Worked with the DEQ and school district to establish an easement and equitable servitude for the property.

## Investigation and Cleanup

The site was intermittently contaminated with asphalt, diesel, gasoline, and plant-equipment-related debris. The high clay content of soils below the fill materials limited vertical migration of the contamination. The plant and shop were demolished and fill materials, including concrete and scrap metal, were removed. An abandoned underground storage tank system was also removed.

The gasoline contamination was near the shallow groundwater at one location, requiring an excavation up to ten feet deep to remove the gasoline-impacted soil. Monitoring wells were installed and four calendar quarters of groundwater monitoring followed, which provided information on groundwater flow direction and contamination level.

Additional contamination was removed during stormwater retention pond construction activities, including a below-ground concrete structure filled with contaminated debris (mostly raw asphalt with some diesel). Contaminated soils were also removed from the property, adjacent property, and utility right-of-way.

## Results and Benefits

The school district was able to purchase the adjacent contaminated property, build the school, and remediate the contamination in a protective, cost-efficient manner. The contamination sources that posed potential groundwater risks were essentially removed. The project won the 2008 Oregon Brownfields Award.

The new school, a LEED Gold for Schools project, represents a significant improvement to the area. The bulk of the surface and subsurface contamination associated with this former asphalt plant has been successfully removed. The site is now a landscaped parking lot and stormwater retention pond associated with the school. Using the state-of-the-art construction methods, the school was designed to reduce energy consumption and minimize its overall environmental footprint. Risks of the plant's residual contamination to human and ecological receptors essentially has been eliminated.



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We're here to help.**



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