

Superfund 101

- The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) created the Superfund program to respond to serious environmental threats posed by toxic waste sites. This was done by:
 - making regulations for closed or abandoned hazardous waste sites.
 - providing for liability of those responsible for hazardous waste release at sites.
 - creating a trust fund to finance the cleanup of sites without a responsible party (e.g. if the responsible party no longer exists, or if the responsible party cannot be identified).
- CERCLA granted authority to manage the Superfund program to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Hazardous waste sites become Superfund sites by being added to the National Priorities List (NPL). The steps for addition of a site to the NPL are:
 - A private citizen, state government, or federal agency provides a report of a potentially hazardous waste site to the EPA.
 - The site is entered by the EPA into the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS).
 - Initial assessment of the site is conducted by the EPA or the site's state.
 - The site is given a "score" under the hazard ranking system (HRS). Sites with a score of 28.5 or greater are eligible for the NPL.
- There are two types of response actions that can be taken at Superfund sites:
 - Short-term removals – address releases or potential releases when prompt response is necessary.
 - Long-term remedial actions – permanently reduce dangers related to the release of hazardous substances from waste sites.

¹ US EPA. (June 22, 2018). *Superfund: National Priorities List (NPL)*. Retrieved from <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-national-priorities-list-npl>.

² Currie, J., Greenstone, M., & Moretti, E. (2011). Superfund cleanups and infant health. *Am Econ Rev*, 101(3), pp. 435-41.

³ US EPA. (2018). *Redevelopment Economics at Superfund Sites*. Retrieved from <https://www.epa.gov/superfund-redevelopment-initiative/redevelopment-economics-superfund-sites>.



Center for Health, Environment & Justice

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- As of June 22, 2018, the Superfund program has accomplished the following¹:
 - 399 sites have been cleaned up and deleted from the NPL.
 - 66 sites on the NPL have partial deletions.
 - 1198 sites on the NPL have construction completions.
- Superfund site cleanup has been shown to mitigate health issues related to release of hazardous substances². Additionally, the redevelopment and reuse of Superfund sites has resulted in creation of jobs and increased revenue for local economies³.
- For additional information on the Superfund program, see **CHEJ's Understanding Superfund guidebook**, which can be found at: www.chej.org/love-canal-publications/superfund-resources.

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¹ US EPA. (June 22, 2018). *Superfund: National Priorities List (NPL)*. Retrieved from <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-national-priorities-list-npl>.

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