



## RARITAN BAY SLAG SUPERFUND SITE OLD BRIDGE, NEW JERSEY

September 2024



### Current Activities

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is preparing to begin cleanup activities for the Seawall Sector portion of the Raritan Bay Slag Superfund site in Old Bridge, New Jersey. The agency is working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to select a contractor to conduct the cleanup.

The EPA finished the engineering design for the Seawall Sector of the site in September 2023.

The EPA proposed a legal agreement known as a consent decree, requiring Old Bridge Township, NL Industries Inc. and its former customers, the state of New Jersey, and several federal agencies, who are all identified as parties potentially responsible for the Raritan Bay Slag contamination, to pay a \$151.1 million settlement. The EPA will receive \$132.4 million as reimbursement for past work and to pay for the future cleanup work at the site. The Natural Resource Trustees will also receive \$18.7 million from the settlement. The Natural Resource Trustees are agencies that seek compensation for damages or loss of use of natural resources due to hazardous substances released into the environment. The technical expertise on the environment from these agencies can help the EPA's site work.



#### Want to Hear From You!

The proposed consent decree was published in the [Federal Register](#) on September 10, 2024, and the 60-day public comment period will last through November 12, 2024. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, or NJDEP, will hold a separate 60-day public comment period after it publishes notice of the consent decree in the New Jersey Register. The U.S. Department of Justice, the EPA, and the NJDEP will review the comments in order to make a decision on whether to move forward with the decree, before seeking final approval from court.

### Community Involvement Plan

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The site team is also conducting interviews with residents, businesses, and organizations now through fall 2024, to determine the most efficient forms of communication between the government and public to receive information about the site. The feedback from the interviews will be incorporated into the site's Community Involvement Plan, which is a document that provides a site history, the EPA's cleanup initiatives, maps of the area, and the EPA's methods to communicate and engage the community.

### Site Background

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The Raritan Bay Slag Superfund site is located within the Laurence Harbor section of Old Bridge and Sayreville, New Jersey. The Sea Land Development Corporation constructed the western jetty and Laurence Harbor seawall using slag.

In September 1972, a local government official contacted the NJDEP and claimed that lead-contaminated waste material was being disposed of along the Laurence Harbor beachfront in Raritan Bay. The NJDEP found high concentrations of lead, arsenic, copper, and antimony along 2,500 feet of the seawall area and the western jetty at the Cheesequake Creek inlet and waterfront area.

In 2007, the NJDEP worked with local officials to notify the public about health concerns. In 2008, the EPA collected sediment, slag, soil, water, and biological samples along the seawall in Laurence Harbor and the Western Jetty at the Cheesequake Creek Inlet, as well as from the beaches near these two locations. The samples showed high levels of lead and other heavy metals present in surface water, soil, and sediment at the site.

After NJDEP's request for the EPA to evaluate the Raritan Bay Slag site for short-term cleanup under the federal Superfund program, the EPA added property associated with Margaret's Creek to the site in 2009. The EPA found slag and battery casings at Margaret's Creek. The EPA added the Raritan Bay Slag site on the National Priorities list in 2009. The primary sources of contamination at the Superfund site are slag and battery casings.

The EPA divided the site into three parts: Margaret's Creek Sector, the Seawall Sector, and Jetty Sector. The agency started addressing contamination at the Margaret's Creek Sector, is now addressing the Seawall Sector, and will address the Jetty Sector last. This order follows the direction that the waves in Raritan Bay flow, in order to prevent clean sites from becoming re-contaminated. The EPA finished cleaning up Margaret's Creek Sector September 2018 by removing soil, slag, and battery casings.

### Contaminants

**Lead** is used in the production of batteries, ammunition, and metal products (solder and pipes). Because of health concerns, the use of lead in paints, ceramic products, caulking, and pipe solder has been dramatically reduced. Lead can cause health problems in almost every organ and system in your body. For more information, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/lead>

**Slag** is a byproduct of the process of extracting metal from metal ore.

## EPA Contact Information

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