

UMore Park Remedial Investigation Frequently Asked Questions

What is a remedial investigation?

A remedial investigation is a technical assessment that characterizes the soil and groundwater quality in an area to determine the type and extent of potential environmental impacts from historical uses on the property. The investigation also assesses the risk to human health and the environment. A remedial investigation includes the analysis of soil and water samples as well as evaluating existing data.

Why was the remedial investigation done?

The University of Minnesota conducted the remedial investigation between January 2011 and January 2012 on 3,500 acres of the 5,000-acre UMore Park property in Dakota County to assess potential environmental impacts resulting from historical uses of the property as a WWII federal government smokeless gunpowder manufacturing facility, called Gopher Ordnance Works, and post-GOW land uses by the University and its tenants. The results of the investigation will help the University determine the actions needed to address any potential impacts that may affect future use of the property. While a number of smaller studies have been done in the past, the University was seeking a more detailed understanding of the environmental status of the property based on uses that occurred before the University acquired the property.

How did the process work?

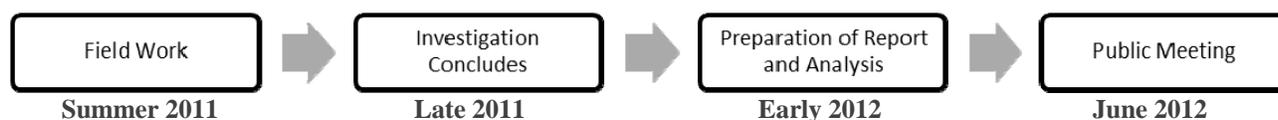
Through a competitive bid process, the University selected Barr Engineering to conduct the remedial investigation. Following a thorough review of resource documentation on historical uses of the property, Barr collected samples of soil and groundwater to evaluate any environmental concerns. However, the remedial investigation was not intended as a complete, final study of all environmental conditions present in the project area. While Barr believes that investigation is now complete in several portions of the study area, additional investigation will be necessary to more fully characterize the scope and extent of releases in some areas to allow design of cleanup actions. This additional work will be completed before or during future development planned for the site.

Who reviewed and approved the remedial investigation process?

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) reviewed and approved all work plans and supporting documents associated with the remedial investigation of the project area. In addition, the University is committed to working cooperatively with Dakota County, the City of Rosemount, Empire Township, and the general public to share information.

What is the project timeline and how can I stay informed?

A public information meeting is scheduled for June 28, 2012 to inform the public about the investigation results and provide an opportunity to ask questions.



Updates and related background information is available on the UMore Park website. The Remedial Investigation report is also posted on the UMore Park website with a hard copy available for review at the UMore Park Administration Building in Rosemount.

How did the University acquire this federal property?

In 1942 and 1943, the U.S. War Department acquired farmland in Dakota County for the construction of the Gopher Ordnance Works, a federal smokeless gunpowder manufacturing facility that supported the War effort. Production began in January 1945, and ceased in October 1945. After WWII, the University acquired the land in two parcels in 1947 and 1948 for research and education.

Did the Remedial Investigation include investigation of the University of Minnesota Rosemount Research Center Superfund Site?

Areas comprising the Rosemount Research Center Superfund Site, which was included on the federal and Minnesota Superfund list, are also present within the UMore Park East Remedial Investigation study area. That Superfund site, which consisted of three electrical transformer recycling facilities operated by former University tenants, and a University chemical waste disposal area, was the subject of extensive cleanup by the University in the 1980s and early 1990s, and has since been administratively closed by the MPCA and United States Environmental Protection Agency. The former Superfund site areas were therefore excluded from the UMore East remedial investigation.

How long have the University and others been assessing the environmental impacts from the former Gopher Ordnance Works?

Under a federal law that provides funding for environmental restoration of former defense sites, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has conducted several inspections and evaluations of the property, beginning in 1985. In a 1999 report, the Corps determined that the entire property was eligible for restoration funds. In 2005 the Corps revised its position and for the first time stated that only the land transferred in 1947 (primarily in the Vermillion Highlands: A Research, Recreation and Wildlife Management Area) is eligible for federally funded investigation and restoration. The Corps completed a limited site investigation of the environmental condition of the 1947 parcel in March 2009.

Who can I contact for more information on the remedial investigation?

Please contact:

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