EPA to Begin Field Work
At the Niagara Falls Boulevard Site, Niagara Falls, New York

Community Update **May 2016**

EPA encourages public participation. If you have any questions or would like additional information regarding the site, please contact one of the following:

Michael Basile
EPA Community Involvement Coordinator
186 Exchange Street
Buffalo, NY 14204
716-551-4410
basile.michael@epa.gov

Or

Eric Daly
EPA On-Scene Coordinator
732-321-4350
daly.eric@epa.gov

UPDATE ON THE SITE

During the week of May 30th, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will begin field activities on two parcels of property at the Niagara Falls Boulevard site in Niagara Falls, New York. There are several parcels to the site, including a bowling alley and a building supply center. They are bordered to the north by a wooded area, to the east by a church, to the south by Niagara Falls Boulevard and a residential area, and to the west by a hotel and a residential area.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPERTIES

In 1978, the U.S. Department of Energy surveyed the Niagara Region by air for radiation and found some properties with low levels of radioactive materials. It is believed that in the early 1960's, a glass-like, granulated by-product called "slag" from former industrial facilities was used as fill material on both the bowling alley and building supply center properties prior to paving. The fill material contained "technologically enhanced naturally occurring radioactive materials", which are industrial by-products enriched with low levels of radioactive elements found in the environment.

In 2013, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the New York State Department of Health conducted a survey of the bowling alley and building supply center properties. In July 2013, they referred the matter to EPA for further investigation.

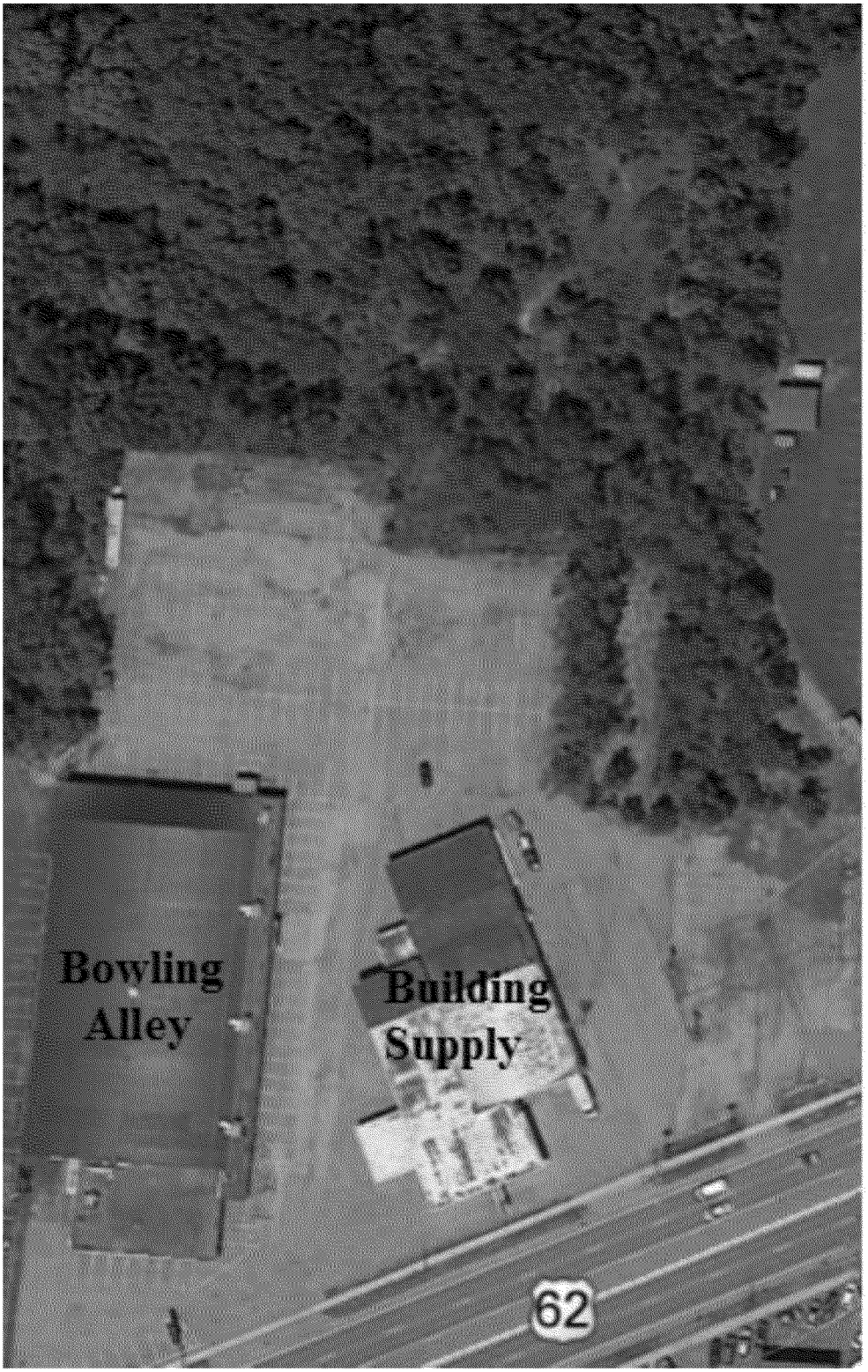
From December 2013 to May 2014, EPA conducted a series of tests at the two properties and concluded that the site did not meet the minimum criteria necessary to be placed on EPA's "National Priorities List", a list of hazardous waste sites in the U.S. which are eligible for long-term cleanup financed under the federal Superfund program. However, it was subsequently determined that material contaminated with radiation was located beneath the asphalt parking lot shared by the bowling alley and a building supply center. EPA determined that the Agency would further assess the site to determine if an action under EPA's short term, or "removal" program was warranted.

In the summer of 2015, EPA performed a gamma radiation survey of the properties and collected soil samples. EPA detected elevated gamma levels in several areas within unoccupied portions of the building supply center. These areas appear to be the portions of the building that were add-ons to the original structure and were constructed on top of the asphalt parking lot. Gamma radiation is high frequency electromagnetic radiation which is biologically hazardous. The occupied interior space of the bowling alley is not contaminated.

In March of 2016, EPA performed additional tests on soil to determine the exact location of radiological contamination under the building supply center.

PHASED APPROACH TO FIELD WORK

Based on survey and soil sampling results, EPA has determined that a short-term cleanup is necessary. The initial work will focus on clearing vegetation from the wooded lot behind the bowling alley and building supply center. This area will be assessed for elevated gamma radiation and used as work areas for the cleanup. The

second phase of work will be removal of material from the identified areas of the building supply center. Excavated material will be replaced with clean material and a new concrete floor will be installed. Later, the contaminated material beneath the asphalt parking lot outside of the buildings will be removed, replaced with clean fill and repaved.

EPA will continue to inform the public of all planned actions at the site.