

NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST (NPL)

NPL Site

March 2024

ACME STEEL COKE PLANT | **Chicago, Illinois**
*Cook County*** Site Location:**

The Acme Steel Coke Plant site is the location of a formerly active coking facility in southeast Chicago, Cook County, Illinois. The former Acme Steel Coke Plant was one of three facilities in the Chicago area that worked collectively to produce coke, molten iron, and steel. The former Acme Steel Coke Plant site consists of approximately 104 acres.

 Site History:

The Acme Steel Coke Plant site was a coke production facility for nearly one hundred years. Coke production was initially conducted at the site by the By-Products Corporation from approximately 1910 to 1929, which changed its name to Interlake Iron Corporation and operated from 1929 to 1986, then by Acme Steel Company, which operated from 1986 to 2001. The facility shut down in 2001 and the property is currently abandoned and unmaintained. In 2020 the Cook County Land Bank Authority acquired approximately one-third of the southern part of the former Acme facility, while the northern 61-acre area remains abandoned and in open tax-delinquent status.

 Site Contamination/Contaminants:

Primary contaminants of concerns at the site are Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs). Large areas of exposed waste are present on-site with elevated levels of PAHs. Additional on-site source areas include a tar pool/ impoundment, the facility trench which historically discharged to the nearby Calumet River, and a buried French drain and sump which collected surface and storm water when the plant was in operation.

 Potential Impacts on Surrounding Community/Environment:

Nearby sediments, wetlands, and sensitive resources, which include Indian Ridge Marsh and the Calumet River have been contaminated. The surface water near the site is used for fishing.

 Response Activities (to date):

The EPA conducted response actions from October 2005 through May of 2007, and removed asbestos, Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), contaminated soils and other wastes from former processing areas, and repaired site fencing. These actions served to mitigate threats from acute hazards and did not address large sources areas on-site or negate the need for further investigation and long-term cleanup.

 Need for NPL Listing:

The state of Illinois referred the site to the EPA because the site has contaminated nearby surface water, wetlands, and sensitive resources, which include Indian Ridge Marsh and the Calumet River, and there are no known viable responsible parties, prior financial assurances, or other environmental program authorities to address the large-scale legacy contamination at the site. Other federal and state cleanup programs were evaluated but are not viable at this time. The EPA received a letter of support for placing this site on the NPL from the state.

[The description of the site (release) is based on information available at the time the site was evaluated with the HRS. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination. See 56 FR 5600, February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. [ATSDR ToxFAQs](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) can be found on the Internet at <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp> or by telephone at 1-800-CDC-INFO or 1-800-232-4636.