



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**®
Norfolk District



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Corps to announce implosion date for Avtex boiler house; EDA unveils redevelopment plans

Norfolk, Va. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District, will join the Economic Development Authority of Front Royal-Warren County at its open house, noon to 3 p.m., May 14, to announce the implosion date for the Avtex Fibers’ boiler house, the old plant’s tallest structure.

The Economic Development Authority (EDA) is hosting the open house at the former Avtex Administration Building, 400 Kendrick Lane, Front Royal, Va., to unveil its plans for transitioning from cleanup to redevelopment, and to announce its new redevelopment name -- Royal Phoenix. The event is open to the public.

Representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which is the lead agency managing the Avtex Fibers Superfund cleanup site, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) and the FMC Corporation, will join the Corps and the EDA to celebrate these two significant milestones.

Avtex Fibers in Front Royal, Va. was declared an EPA Superfund site in 1986. The FMC Corporation, a former owner of the site, is responsible for performing the cleanup actions and is coordinating overall site activities with the EPA and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The ongoing Corps work to address environmental hazards is separate from the Superfund site cleanup efforts, under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA). Corps funding was obtained through Congressional appropriations spearheaded by U.S. Senator John W. Warner (R-Va.) and Congressman Frank R. Wolf (R-Va.-10th) to address non-CERCLA items such as asbestos, lead from paint and building demolition.

Located in the northern Shenandoah Valley, at the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the facility was constructed in the late 1930s with fiber manufacturing operations beginning in 1940. From 1940 through 1962, American Viscose, Inc. owned the facility. FMC Corporation took ownership of the plant from 1963 until 1976, when Avtex Fibers, Inc. purchased the 440-acre site from FMC and continued until 1989 to manufacture lightweight, synthetic fibers such as rayon, polyester and polypropylene.

Working in close consultation with the EPA, the FMC Corp., the VDEQ and the EDA, the Corps began its cleanup efforts at Avtex with a site assessment investigation in 2000. The Corps cleanup process involved four phases: planning; asbestos abatement; buildings demolition; and debris removal and recycling. The Corps continues to also work closely with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to provide the agency with photo documentation and descriptive building information, and to support the retrieval of historically significant items discovered during cleanup.

To date the Corps has removed or recycled the following items:

- 177 tractor-trailer loads of asbestos-contaminated materials
- 128 drums (55-gallon capacity) of floor sweepings
- 16 drums of material containing polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs)
- 134 boxes of waste fluorescent light tubes
- 6 drums of waste containing Mercury
- 550 truckloads of discarded building equipment, furnishings and miscellaneous debris

- 780 truckloads of steel and other metals disposed of as recycled material for melting and reuse
- 170,000 cubic yards of crushed concrete, stone and brick for beneficial reuse on site (sub-base material for site roadways)
- 12,000 gallons of recovered oil for recycle

The Corps project delivery team (PDT), in developing its site management plan, determined that the Powerhouse complex located on the site's eastern half would be its final clean-up phase. "The PDT wanted to ensure that all appropriate safeguards, such as air monitoring, were in place before the September implosion of the huge boiler house to protect site workers and the community of Front Royal," said Corps Project Manager Al Opstal. "Also, we wanted to thoroughly examine all environmental actions required for successfully imploding a structure of this size."

"Once the final Powerhouse complex building is demolished and its materials properly disposed of or recycled as with the previous structures, and cleanup by FMC is finished and approved by the EPA, the EDA can move forward and integrate that portion of the site into its Royal Phoenix development," said EDA Executive Director, Paul J. Carroll.

"The Royal Phoenix Development project at the Avtex Fibers Superfund site is a significant success story that benefits Virginia's environment and the economy of the northern Shenandoah Valley," VDEQ Director Robert G. Burnley said. "The sustainable development practices incorporated into the reuse of the site show a commitment to enhanced environmental stewardship that will be an excellent example for future projects like this throughout Virginia."

For more information on the Corps cleanup efforts at Avtex, contact Project Manager Al Opstal, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District, at (757) 201-7536. For more information on Royal Phoenix, contact Mr. Paul J. Carroll, Executive Director of the Economic Development Authority, Front Royal-Warren County, at (540) 635-2182 or visit the Avtex Fibers web site at www.avtextfibers.com.

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