

Environmental FAQs

When was environmental cleanup completed? Is it safe to buy property at Rice Creek Commons? Cleanup of the Rice Creek Commons portion of the former Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP) in Arden Hills was completed in November 2015. The county cleaned the property beyond minimum standards to allow for unrestricted land use status – including residential or recreational use – the highest standard of environmental remediation.

Commissioner's Certificate of Completion

The County's environmental cleanup work was overseen by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) through its Voluntary Investigation and Cleanup (VIC) program and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The site received a Certificate of Completion, the highest level of liability assurance available under Minnesota law, verifying the successful completion of all soil environmental remediation, from the MPCA in 2016.

Delisting from State and Federal Superfund

Based on the County's remediation work, the EPA and MPCA removed soil and surface water from the federal Superfund list (National Priorities List) on September 23, 2019, and the state Superfund list (Permanent List of Priorities) on April 22, 2020.

What about the continued remediation of the groundwater? The on-site treatment system for groundwater pumps contaminated groundwater and sends it to a treatment system. The Army will continue to be responsible for groundwater treatment until cleanup goals are achieved and groundwater is delisted from the National Priorities List. For more information on past and current cleanup, please refer to additional resources listed below.

Is it safe for people to live at Rice Creek Commons? How can we be sure of that? As mentioned above, Ramsey County, under the oversight of the MPCA, completed comprehensive remediation of all known soil contaminants exceeding residential cleanup standards. The County also completed extensive additional investigation activities including a sitewide assessment of shallow soil quality, additional investigation beneath building pads prior to their removal, soil screening at all previous underground storage tank locations, sampling at select locations during removal of sanitary sewers, and soil removal and sampling following removal of all railroad tracks. All of this effort was completed with the goal of receiving a Certificate of Completion and removal of the property from state and federal superfund lists. Because the groundwater contamination is being actively monitored and treated, and all water services will be served by city water, it does not pose any human or ecological health risk at Rice Creek Commons and does not restrict the development or use of the property.

What happens if more contamination is found when construction begins? Future earth moving activities at Rice Creek Commons will be completed under an MPCA approved Construction Contingency Plan that calls for environmental awareness and oversight during earthwork. If residual industrial TCAAP contamination is discovered, the MPCA and the Army will be notified. The Army remains responsible to investigate and remediate any such contamination in accordance with state and federal waste management rules and regulations.

Will the Round Lake cleanup have any effect on Rice Creek Commons? A small area of the Rice Creek Commons site will be used to stage the sediment removed from Round Lake prior to treatment and off-site disposal, as required by the MPCA. The Army's required remediation of Round Lake will be completed in coordination with the County to help ensure that the work will not impact the development of Rice Creek Commons.

Additional Resources

- Army: <https://tcaaprab.org/>
- EPA: <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csitinfo.cfm?id=0504010>
- MPCA: <https://webapp.pca.state.mn.us/cleanup/search/superfund?siteId=47112-AREA0000000014>
- City of Arden Hills: <https://mn-ardenhills2.civicplus.com/172/TCAAP-Redevelopment>
- Ramsey County: <https://www.ramseycounty.us/rice-creek-commons>