

11/11/03 - Superfund  
*Redevelopment of the Denver Radium Superfund Site*  
*Denver, Colorado*

Part of the Denver Radium Superfund site now hosts a 130,000 square foot Home Depot store, as well as an outdoor lawn and garden center. Although this Superfund site includes more than 65 contaminated properties throughout the city where high grade radium ore was processed until the industry collapsed in the 1920s, one of these areas now yields a different type of value. Since the property has been cleaned up and redeveloped, tremendous environmental, social, and economic benefits have been realized.

Remedial investigations of the Denver Radium properties began in 1981 and the site was listed on the National Priorities List in 1983. The portion of the site located just south of the central business district designated by EPA as Operable Unit 4/5 (OU 4/5) had been home to a tile and brick manufacturer, as well as the Denver & Rio Grand and Burlington Northern Railroad yards. All were left vacant in the early 1980s. In all, 97,000 tons of contaminated soil and materials were removed from the area. Remaining metallic soils were covered with protective caps.



In downtown Denver, good sites are at a premium; according to one developer “we’re listing Superfund sites and they’re selling.” In 1995, Home Depot bought the 17-acre OU 4/5 portion of the site in order to build a new store. The company entered into a partnership with EPA to participate in the cleanup of the contaminated soil in exchange for limits on the company’s liability for the contamination. EPA consolidated the soil on the site and Home Depot constructed a protective cap over it. Under the agreement, Home Depot is responsible for maintaining the cap, as well as for ensuring that the property is never used for residential purposes and the groundwater is never used for drinking water. By the end of 1996, the store, parking lot, and outdoor garden and lawn care center were completed and Home Depot was open for business, allowing urban Denver residents the option of shopping for home improvement items without leaving the city.

### **Positive Economic and Fiscal Impacts**

- Approximately 250 on-site jobs at Home Depot
- Almost \$6,400,000 in income from on-site jobs in 2002
- Almost \$300,000 in Colorado State income tax revenue from on-site jobs in 2002
- Approximately \$7,300,000 in property value on the site in 2003
- Over \$17,000,000 in increased property values within approximately a quarter mile of the site from 1999 to 2003
- Approximately \$300,000 in increased property tax revenue for Denver County in 2003

### **Environmental and Social Benefits**

- Protected human health and the environment by removing contaminated soil and materials
- Improved aesthetic value of the local landscape
- Attracted new businesses to the area