Kansas Brownfields News

KDHE's Brownfields News is published to share brownfields success stories throughout the state of Kansas.

The Southern Kansas Coalition Applies For Million-Dollar Brownfields Grant

KDHE submitted a Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant Application to EPA this fall. The grant process is an annual, nationwide competition that promotes community redevelopment and economic sustainability. The Coalition created was coined the Southern Kansas Brownfield Coalition and consists of KDHE, the Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission (SEKRPC), the South Central Kansas Economic Development District (SCKEDD), Great Plains Development, Inc. (GPDI), the City of El Dorado, and the City of Greensburg. If awarded, the Brownfields Coalition Grant would provide $1,000,000 to promote economic growth in our Kansas communities. KDHE would serve as the lead Coalition partner and grant manager. Grant funds would be used to provide environmental assessments and area-wide planning within the Southern Kansas Brownfield Coalition jurisdiction. Environmental assessments performed under this grant will count toward the due diligence necessary for the property owner to claim protection from CERCLA liability as an innocent landowner, contiguous property owner, or bona fide prospective purchaser. KDHE will be notified sometime next spring if the Coalition was selected for the grant award.

Three Kansas Brownfields Workshops Conducted in 2010

The Kansas Brownfields Program conducted three regional brownfields workshops: two in April and one in October 2010. Workshops were held in Garden City (October), Hutchinson (April), and Olathe (April), Kansas. Approximately 100 participants total attended the workshops, representing local government, economic development staff, community grant writers, community groups, real estate developers, commercial real estate brokers, lenders, regional economic development agencies, consultants, and others interested in financial resources for local redevelopment. The workshops focused on identifying State, Federal, and other financial and technical resources to assist communities in resolving environmental and redevelopment issues. The workshops also provided opportunities to learn computer programs developed to assist communities in brownfields redevelopment. The K-State Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) Program presented its newly released interactive Brownfields Inventory Tool, available online at http://tab-bit.org.

Brownfields Program Assists Landmark Rails to Trails Project

The City of Wichita is utilizing the Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan & Grant Fund (BCRLGF) program to clean up a contaminated former railroad corridor known as the Redbud Corridor. The Redbud Corridor is about three miles long and extends west to east from Interstate I-135 to Oliver Street between 17th Street (North) and Central (South) in Wichita, Kansas. Heavy metal contamination in the soil was initially identified in a Brownfields Targeted Assessment in February 2010. The proposed cleanup project entails capping the contaminated soil and completing the surface with concrete to provide a walking/biking path. An Environmental Use Control Agreement will be put in place to ensure continued maintenance of the cap.

A portion of the Redbud rails-to-trails path in Wichita.

On June 23, 2010, a Subgrant Agreement between KDHE and the City of Wichita was finalized to provide $200,000 to the City of Wichita for the Redbud cleanup project. In addition, a $2.3 million dollar federal grant was leveraged to provide startup funding. The first segment of the bike path is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2010, with the entire project to be completed by summer 2012.

2010 Kansas Brownfields Program Update

The Kansas Brownfields Program received its Fiscal Year 2011 (July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011) grant funding from EPA to continue to conduct Brownfields Targeted Site Assessments (BTAs). Eligible properties are currently idle and have a prospective purchaser with a reuse or redevelopment plan. From July 2009 to July 2010 activity in the Kansas Brownfields Program reached an all-time high, with approximately 70 redevelopment property assessments performed. According to Ryan Weiser, Brownfields Coordinator, "the success can be attributed persistent community outreach activities, collaboration with local and state partners, and a Program framework that yields comfort and positive experiences for communities."

"The first step toward success is taken when you refuse to be a captive of the environment in which you first find yourself."

Mark Caine

KDHE Brownfields Team gets Asbestos Certifications

In the state of Kansas, asbestos activities are regulated by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) under the Bureau of Air and Radiation, Asbestos Control Section: Kansas Statutes Annotated (K.S.A Chapter 65, Article 53), Kansas Administrative Regulations (K.A.R. 28-50-1 to 28-50-14). KDHE requires that any asbestos-related activities conducted in a public building be performed by personnel licensed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) AHERA requirements. Ryan Weiser, Brownfields Coordinator, and Doug Doubek, Brownfields Program Manager, received Asbestos Certification as Inspectors under AHERA and ASHARA. The protocol entailed a three day course through approved instruction and passing a written exam with a score greater than 70%.

> *"It's a question of discipline," the little prince told me later on. "When you've finished washing and dressing each morning, you must tend your planet."*
>
> *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry*
> *The Little Prince*

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulation 40 CFR 61, Subpart M, National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP), prohibits the release of asbestos fibers to the atmosphere during renovation or demolition activities. To be compliant with NESHAP, potentially regulated asbestos-containing building materials must be identified, classified, and quantified prior to planned disturbances or demolition. Asbestos has been a major component in driving Kansas Brownfields Targeted Assessments, which can include asbestos sampling surveys. Numerous properties are currently benefiting from such services, particularly in demolition and rehab projects.

Did you know?

Asbestos, lead-based paint, mold, radon, and indoor air quality are all considered non-scope items that could adversely impact a building or project. Non-scope items are generally not included in a Phase I report, but may be included in a Brownfields Targeted Assessment if they might complicate reuse or redevelopment objectives.

Brownfields News

"Man shapes himself through decisions that shape his environment."
Rene Dubois

"It is the neglect of timely repair that makes rebuilding necessary."
Richard Whately

"Learn all you can from the mistakes of others. You won't have time to make them all yourself."
Alfred Sheinwold

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KDHE Presents at the Kansas Department of Commerce Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Workshop

The Kansas Brownfields Program presented at the annual CDBG workshop in Salina, Kansas on April 14, 2010. The Kansas Brownfields Program collaborates with the Kansas Department of Commerce Rural Development Division to provide environmental assessments, which are key components in fund leveraging for communities, businesses, and entrepreneurs. An environmental review is required prior to grant or loan fund consideration through the US Department of Commerce or US Department of Agriculture. The current KDHE Agency Environmental (formerly Intergovernmental) Review process requires communities or lenders to submit a project description to a central point of contact within KDHE. The information is then further distributed to all applicable programs within the agency for review and comment. Through this resource the Kansas Brownfields Program identified approximately 60 community redevelopment projects in the State during FY10. Approximately 50 were deemed eligible for Brownfields Assessments, and approximately 20 were cleared for redevelopment in FY10. The targeted projects consist of libraries, community buildings, and fire stations, and focus on economic and community need as related to rural community development and/or small start–up businesses.

Brownfields 2011 Conference:

The National Brownfields Conference will be held in Philadelphia April 3-5, 2011 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. For registration and trip planning information, please visit http://www.brownfields2011.org/.