

What is a brownfield?

Brownfields are generally abandoned, idle or underused properties, or vacant land where a facility once stood. Brownfields can be anywhere: in big and small communities, on main streets and the outskirts of town, in small parcels and large, multi-acre sites.

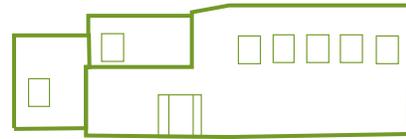
Some of these locations are contaminated and require cleanup, while many more only need testing to demonstrate they are ready for reuse.

Left unaddressed, brownfields can have negative impacts on the surrounding area, inviting property crime, hindering economic development, and impacting public health.

It does not have to be this way, though. Testing can clear the way for redevelopment. **ECIA recently won a grant from the EPA to assist with the cost of testing brownfield sites. Your site may qualify for this assistance.**

How do you know if a site is a brownfield? If the answer is “yes” to two key questions:

- Could the property be polluted or contain hazardous substances like petroleum spills, lead, asbestos, heavy metals or other chemical contaminants?
- Would that be a reason a potential buyer might choose not to redevelop or reuse the site?



Basic brownfields definition

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines brownfields as “real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.”



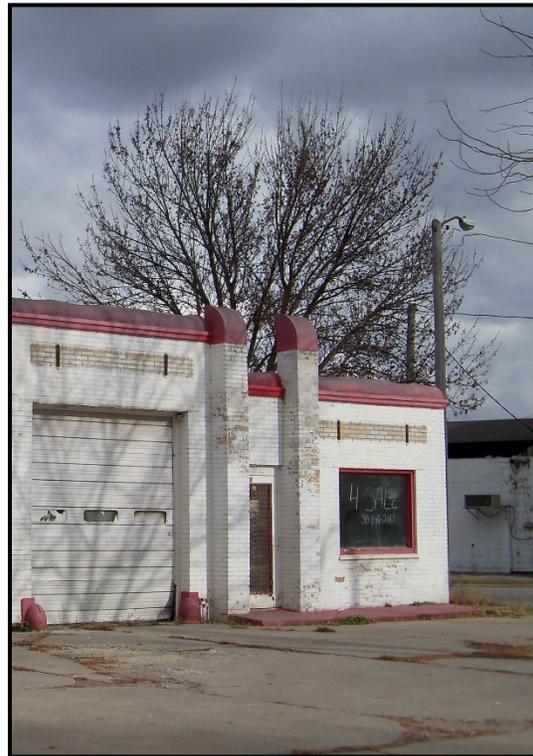
Many people equate brownfields with Superfund sites. In fact, less than 1% of contaminated sites are serious enough to require that level of remediation. Brownfields are far more common and require less intervention.

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Knowing the history of a site can help identify potential contaminants

Potential contaminants by past use

<i>Automotive garages/ body shops</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste oils • paints • cleaners • solvents • scrap metals
<i>Dry cleaners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • petroleum products • chlorinated solvents
<i>Farmlands</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pesticides • arsenic • copper
<i>Gasoline stations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • petroleum products • lead • chlorinated solvents
<i>Manufacturing plants</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • petroleum products • solvents • metals • PCBs
<i>Railroads/rail yards</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCBs • petroleum products • lead
<i>Salvage yards</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • petroleum products • lead • degreasers • asbestos • dioxin



Contact Us

Dawn Danielson

East Central Intergovernmental Association

7600 Commerce Park

Dubuque, IA 52002

ddanielson@ecia.org

563-690-5772

www.ecia.org/brownfields/

www.ecia.org



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