

Focus on: Kittitas Valley Fire & Rescue



Figure 1. Kittitas Valley Fire & Rescue found an ideal home to serve their community on a brownfield property.

Community needs promote brownfield cleanup

We often think of cleaning up brownfields as a way to make properties ready for redevelopment to meet community needs. In Ellensburg, the Kittitas Valley Fire and Rescue (KVFR) project showed that a focus on meeting a community need could lead to cleaning up a contaminated property.

When KVFR needed a new home for their District Headquarters, they conducted extensive station location studies triangulating their response times and frequencies. They identified the Mackner Transport property as suitable location, but the property's petroleum contamination presented redevelopment challenges.

Property history

The Mackner Transport property was first developed in the 1950s as an agricultural business associated with local hay production. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the business operations expanded to include an independent scale house.

The scale house and site operations were important to hay farmers and other agricultural producers in the region. The scale house services ended around 2001, but the site continued to be used for hay storage and a diesel repair shop until 2013.

Fuel service was also provided at the site. A 1991 Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) site investigation report identified three underground storage tanks (USTs), including one gasoline and two diesel fuel tanks and associated dispensers. In the late 1990s or early 2000s, the tanks were removed by a local contractor. No site assessment or other environmental investigation was completed at the time.

A potential buyer investigated the property in 2005, identifying a fourth UST associated with the diesel repair shop and petroleum-impacted soil and groundwater.

Integrated Planning Grant activities

KVFR applied for an Integrated Planning Grant (IPG) from Ecology to conduct environmental due diligence and identify potential redevelopment options for the site that complement other nearby developments and provide community benefit.

The IPG activities included Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments, a natural and cultural resources study, an engineering feasibility study, and community involvement to develop a conceptual redevelopment plan and implementation strategy. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency State Response Program grant funded Ecology staff providing technical oversight for the IPG activities.

Cleanup and redevelopment

Kittitas County voters approved a property tax to support a \$6.7-million bond to fund the cleanup and redevelopment of the property. Due to budgetary constraints, the City of Ellensburg’s consultant had 90 days to clean up the property from the time of the contract award before the fire station construction began.

Because of the time constraints, the consultant developed an aggressive cleanup schedule that included an environmental site characterization to identify the extent and magnitude of soil and groundwater contamination and a cleanup action plan.

The cleanup included overburden and hot spot soil removal and stockpiling, lance-injecting chemical oxidants into remaining soils, installing a structure for future chemical injections as necessary, and installing compliance monitoring wells.

Monitoring after cleanup showed contaminant concentrations in groundwater were below instrument detection limits, demonstrating a successful cleanup.

Community involvement

Securing voter approval for the \$6.7-million bond to redevelop the property was no small feat. Voters in Kittitas County were weary of additional property taxes.

Community support was built by publishing informative articles in the local newspaper about how the new fire station would benefit the community, and the bond reached the needed 60 percent approval the first time it was on the ballot.

New location provides better service to thousands

KVFR serves a permanent population of about 28,500 people, with an additional student population of approximately 9,500 when Central Washington University is in session. The service area is 278 square miles for fire suppression and 1,200 square miles for emergency medical service coverage.

In addition to providing KVFR with a state-of-the-art facility, the new location allows KVFR to better serve the community. Approximately 40 percent of Fire District calls are within a six-block radius, and 90 percent of calls triangulate to this location.



Figure 2. The Mackner Transport building prior to cleanup and redevelopment.

Mackner Transport cleanup and redevelopment by the numbers

Funding summary

Source	Amount
Integrated Planning Grant from Ecology	\$200,000
Local funds for property acquisition. The sale price was negotiated down from \$919,000 to accommodate cleanup costs.	\$505,000
Local bond for redevelopment	\$6,700,000

Cleanup and redevelopment timeline

Year(s)	Activity
1991	First record of potential environmental contamination at the site; three underground storage tanks (USTs) are found.
Late 1990s – early 2000s	USTs and associated piping are removed.
2005	Environmental investigation identifies a fourth UST.
2011 – 2012	Ecology Integrated Planning Grant used for environmental assessments and redevelopment planning.
2015	Supplemental assessment and site cleanup activities completed.
2015 – 2016	Groundwater monitoring to confirm success of cleanup remedy.
2015 – 2016	Construction of new facility. Grand opening ceremony on June 4, 2016.

Related information

- Property name: [Mackner Transport](#)¹ (formerly)
- Ecology Cleanup Site ID# 11724
- Property address: 400 East Mountain View Avenue, Ellensburg
- Assistance Recipient: [Kittitas Valley Fire & Rescue](#)²



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¹ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=11724>

² <http://kvfr.org/>