



Flooded Superfund Site: Horton Iron & Metal Corporation, Wilmington, NC

Superfund Sites in the Path of Hurricane Laura

There are dozens of Superfund hazardous waste sites in states potentially affected by Hurricane Laura. Flooding of hazardous waste sites can result in toxic substances finding their way into flood waters and nearby communities.

Since 1980, the Superfund toxic waste cleanup program has worked to protect the approximately 53 million Americans who live within 3 miles of the nation's most polluted toxic waste sites.¹ There are over 1,300 of these sites across the country.²

Over the years, the Superfund program has evolved beyond just conducting cleanups at traditional hazardous waste sites; the Superfund program now supports response actions triggered by terrorism, natural disasters and other catastrophes. The Superfund program helped respond to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, the anthrax contamination in the U.S. Senate, and the initial federal response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005.³

Flooding of Superfund Sites Can Threaten Human Health and the Environment

In September 2017, 13 Superfund sites were flooded in the Houston, Texas, area following Hurricane Harvey.⁴ The cancer-causing chemical dioxin leaked at at least one site.⁵

There are 55 Superfund National Priorities List sites in Texas, and 13 in Louisiana, the states hardest hit by Hurricane Laura.⁶

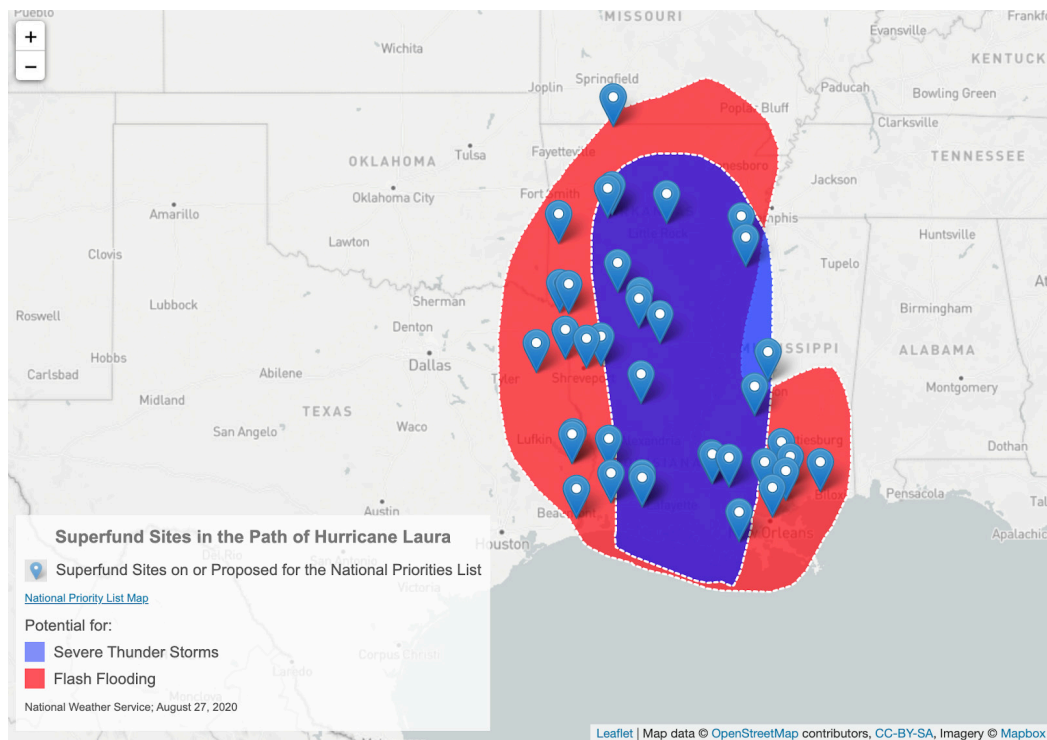
Each state also has additional hazardous waste sites that are under state supervision.

There are at least 37 sites that are proposed for or on the National Priorities List in areas at risk for significant weather due to Hurricane Laura, and

dozens more further inland.

Those sites are:

- Hart Creosoting Company, Jasper, TX
- Jasper Creosoting Company, Jasper, TX
- Star Lake Canal, Port Neches, TX
- Longhorn Army Ammunition Plant, Karnack, TX
- Koppers Co., Inc., Texarkana, TX
- Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant, Texarkana, TX
- Garland Creosoting, Longview, TX
- Gulf State Utilities-North Ryan Street, Lake Charles, LA
- American Creosote DeRidder, DeRidder, LA
- SBA Shipyard, Jennings, LA
- EVR-Wood Treating/Evangeline Refining Company, Jennings, LA
- Devil's Swamp Lake, Scotlandville, LA
- Combustion, Inc., Denham Springs, LA
- Highway 71/72 Refinery, Bossier City, LA
- Marion Pressure Treating, Marion, LA
- Louisiana Army Ammunition Plant, Doyline, LA
- Madisonville Creosote Works, Madisonville, LA
- Colonial Creosote, Bogalusa, LA
- Petro-Processors of Louisiana, Inc., Scotlandville, LA
- Agriculture Street Landfill, New Orleans, LA
- American Creosote Works, Inc. (Winnfield



Superfund site coordinates from Superfund National Priorities List Map.¹⁰ Significant weather area, defined as the potential for flash flooding, thunderstorms, heavy snowfall, and accumulating Freezing Rain from the National Weather Service August 27, 2020 Significant Weather Map.¹¹

- Plant), Winnfield, LA
- Delta Shipyard, Houma, LA
- Bayou Bonfouca, Slidell, LA
- Ouachita Nevada Wood Treater, Reader, AR
- Cedar Chemical Company, West Helena, AR
- Popile, Inc., El Dorado, AR
- MacMillan Ring Free Oil, Norphlet, AR
- Vertac, Inc., Jacksonville, AR
- Mid-South Wood Products, Mena, AR
- Midland Products, Yell, AR
- Mountain Pine Pressure Treating, Plainview, AR
- Arkwood, Inc., Omaha, AR
- Picayune Wood Treating, Picayune, MS
- Sonford Products, Flowood, MS
- Red Panther Chemical Company, Clarksdale, MS
- Chemfax, Inc., Gulfport, MS
- Potter Co., Copiah, MS

Responding to Threats from Toxic Waste Sites

The EPA helped Superfund site managers prepare for the storm and determine if any immediate actions are needed to ensure contamination does not endanger human health or the environment.⁷

People living near the 37 sites above should be cautious during the aftermath of the storm. If a person does have to wade into any floodwaters and experiences any negative health effects following the storm, the person should seek professional medical attention immediately. Anyone cleaning out homes or yards after the storm should wear gloves and masks.⁸ If government regulators announce that there are toxic spills near your home, follow official instructions before returning to the area or before beginning cleanup.

Finally, the “polluter tax” should be restored for Superfund sites. The polluter tax ensures that the polluters responsible for contamination of a site are held responsible for the cost of cleaning it up. After Congress allowed this tax to expire in 1995, taxpayer dollars have been used to clean up sites left by companies that can no longer pay, and this has resulted in fewer sites being cleaned up each year. The EPA cleaned up 89 orphaned sites in 1999 but by 2009, the number dropped to 19.⁹

The EPA’s ability to remediate these sites is significantly hampered by lack of funding. The long-term solution to protecting people from Superfund sites during storms is to clean up these toxic sites, and the EPA needs the funding to complete these cleanups.

Notes

- 1 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Population Surrounding 1,836 Superfund Remedial Sites*, accessed at <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/webpopulationrsuperfund-sites9.28.15.pdf>, 28 August 2020.
- 2 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Superfund: National Priorities List (NPL)*, accessed at <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-national-priorities-list-npl>, 27 August 2020.
- 3 U.S. PIRG, *Empty Pockets: Facing Hurricane Katrina's Cleanup with a Bankrupt Superfund*, December 2005, accessed at https://uspirg.org/sites/pirg/files/reports/Empty_Pockets_USPIRG.pdf.
- 4 U.S. PIRG, *Superfund Sites Need Testing and Funding Following Hurricane Harvey Flooding (news release)*, 5 September 2017, accessed at <https://uspirg.org/news/usp/superfund-sites-need-testing-and-funding-following-hurricane-harvey-flooding>.
- 5 Alex Stuckey, "Clean Up of San Jacinto Waste Pits Moving Forward," *Houston Chronicle*, 10 April 2018.
- 6 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *National Priorities List (NPL) Sites - By State*, accessed at <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/national-priorities-list-npl-sites-state>, 27 August 2020.
- 7 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "EPA Responds to Tropical Storm Marco, Prepares for Tropical Storm Laura", 25 August 2020, accessed at <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-responds-tropical-storm-marco-prepares-tropical-storm-laura>.
- 8 *New York Times*, "How to Cleanup After a Hurricane or Flood," 14 September 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/14/smarter-living/how-to-clean-up-after-a-hurricane-or-flood.html>.
- 9 *Politifact*, "Restore Superfund So That Polluters Pay for Cleanups," 1 July 2011, <https://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/promises/obameter/promise/318/restore-superfund-program-so-that-polluters-pay-fo/>.
- 10 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Superfund National Priorities List (NPL) Where You Live Map*, accessed at <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/search-superfund-sites-where-you-live>, 27 August 2020.
- 11 National Weather Service, *Weather Prediction Center*, accessed at <https://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/kml/kmlproducts.php>, 27 August 2020.