

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



# BROWNFIELDS SUCCESS IN NEW ENGLAND

## FORMER AZTEC INDUSTRIES

NORTH BROOKFIELD, MA



US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

<b>PROPERTY DETAILS</b>	<b>Address:</b>	10 Grove St., 55 School St. and 14 South Common St. North Brookfield, MA
	<b>Size:</b>	5.35 acres
	<b>Former Use:</b>	Asbestos product manufacturer
	<b>Contaminants:</b>	Asbestos, petroleum
	<b>Current Use:</b>	Police station and developable parcel
	<b>Owner:</b>	Town of North Brookfield
<b>PARTNERS</b>	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), MassDevelopment, Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS), Massachusetts Office of Business Development, Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC), Town of North Brookfield, North Brookfield Downtown Development Committee	

<b>FUNDING DETAILS</b>	<b>EPA State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG):</b>	\$33,806	
	<b>EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grants:</b>	\$400,000	
	<b>Massachusetts EOPSS Grant:</b>	\$200,000	
	<b>Massachusetts EOE Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grant:</b>	\$25,076	
	<b>Massachusetts DHCD Grant:</b>	\$44,900	
	<b>Town of North Brookfield:</b>	\$3,200,000	
	<b>HIGHLIGHTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used suite of federal and state funding sources to cleanup highly contaminated site.</li> <li>Transformed eyesore and public health hazard into new police station and desirable development opportunity.</li> </ul>	

**Motivation for Redevelopment:** North Brookfield is a small rural community in central Massachusetts. The town has a rich industrial history, but has experienced significant job losses since 2000 and has a higher poverty rate and lower median household income than the county and state. Located in the heart of downtown North Brookfield, the former Aztec Industries site was an eyesore and public health hazard. The site was declared one of the highest priority brownfields within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and its redevelopment is at the center of North Brookfield's strategy to attract investment to the downtown.

**Property History:** The Aztec Industries property has a history of industrial uses dating back to the early 1900s. Initially the site was used for textile manufacturing. Starting in 1919, the Asbestos Textile Company manufactured asbestos-based textile products on the property. From the mid-1940s through the mid-1980s, Aztec Industries manufactured asbestos products on the site, including transit board, friction products (e.g., brake liners), and textile products. The company suffered during the 1980s, when asbestos products began to be seen as potential health hazards. In 1988 Aztec Industries filed for bankruptcy and abandoned its multi-building complex. The property's former uses left extensive asbestos contamination, causing a public health and environmental hazard and creating a stigma that prevented the site's redevelopment for 20 years.

**Project Results:** Cleanup efforts were initiated in 1996 when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) removed 1,832 bags of asbestos. The following year, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) emptied four underground storage tanks and one aboveground storage tank (the tanks were removed in 2000). Site assessments in 1999

found petroleum and asbestos contamination and asbestos containing materials scattered and buried across the site. In 2000, North Brookfield acquired the Aztec Industries property, composed of three separate parcels, through tax foreclosure. A series of EPA grants along with resources from a diverse array of state agencies enabled the town to continue the long process of remediating and redeveloping the site. Cleanup activities included demolishing the abandoned buildings and removing onsite storage tanks and asbestos containing materials. North Brookfield also undertook planning studies to determine the most appropriate reuse strategy. Ultimately, the town decided to divide the 5.3-acre site, using one acre as the site of a new police station while leaving the remaining area for future industrial and commercial development.

The new North Brookfield police station opened in June of 2010, replacing the inadequate temporary headquarters in a nearby basement and former pub. The town is actively seeking a developer for the remainder of the site. With the new police station and extensive cleanup activities, North Brookfield has successfully transformed a blighted, highly contaminated property into a community asset and desirable development opportunity. In addition, the redevelopment of the Aztec Industries site furthers the town's master plan goals to focus growth within the downtown, helping to maintain North Brookfield's rural character.

TIMELINE	
<b>Oct. 1996 – Jan. 1997</b>	EPA removal action
<b>1997</b>	Onsite storage tanks emptied
<b>Aug. 1999</b>	Phase I ESA completed
<b>2000</b>	Town assumes ownership of property
<b>2000</b>	Onsite storage tanks removed
<b>Jan. 2001</b>	Additional Phase I ESA completed
<b>Sept. 2006</b>	Phase II ESA completed
<b>June 2010</b>	Cleanup completed
<b>June 2010</b>	New police station opens