



NOTICE OF 30-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
Salvation Army Site
2025 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina

DHEC (the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control) is accepting public comments on a potential Voluntary Cleanup Contract until July 1, 2009.

The Voluntary Cleanup Contract, #09-5807-NRP, will affect approximately 2.2 acres identified by tax map numbers R09015-02-03, R09015-02-07, and R09015-02-08. A company known as the Midlands Housing Alliance wants to buy the property from its current owners. This Voluntary Cleanup Contract will be between DHEC and the Alliance.

The property has been in commercial use since the late 1800's. Since then, companies on portions of the property have operated a printing business, a gas filling station, and automobile dealerships with service centers. A motel operated on the property from 1966 until the mid-1990s. Most recently, the Salvation Army has operated the old motel building as a homeless shelter.

Environmental testing was done on the property because of the types of businesses that formerly operated there. The testing has found cleaning solvents in the groundwater, but it is not certain if the pollution is due to the former businesses on this property, or if it came from other nearby business locations.

The Midland Housing Alliance intends to demolish most of the old motel building to redevelop it as a homeless transition center. If this Voluntary Cleanup Contract is implemented, DHEC will allow the Alliance to acquire the property as a "Brownfields Site" because of the environmental pollution. The Alliance did not create the pollution, but will take steps to control it to make the property safe for re-use.

DHEC will not hold the Midland Housing Alliance responsible for the pre-existing pollution in exchange for doing work under the Voluntary Cleanup Contract. Under State law, the Alliance will not be responsible if anyone is affected by the contamination. Entering into this contract does not reduce the responsibility of any former owners or operators of the site.

Under the proposed contract, the Midland Housing Alliance will test additional samples of groundwater from the property. If significant contamination is found, the Alliance will be required to take additional steps to protect human health and the environment.

DHEC uses Voluntary Cleanup Contracts to keep Brownfield sites in productive reuse. Public comments on the proposed contracts help DHEC balance the environmental and redevelopment issues in the best interest of the state. The proposed contract is available at http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/lwm/public_notice.asp. Printed copies may be obtained from the DHEC Freedom of Information Office at (803) 898-3882.

Citizens may provide written, email, or telephone comments on the proposed contract until July 1, 2009. Questions or comments may be directed to Craig Dukes, email dukescv@dhec.sc.gov, or TOLL-FREE telephone (866) 576-3432. Written comments should be directed to “Craig Dukes, SCDHEC, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201”.