

Flintkote demolition to begin next week EPA says

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JOED VIERA/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER The remnants of the old Flintkote building materials plant on Mill Street are to be demolished under the auspices of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency beginning next week.

Demolition work will start next week on the Flintkote property, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

The EPA will begin work on the building, which is located at 300 Mill St. and part of the Eighteenmile Creek Superfund Site in Lockport.

According to Terry Kish, on-scene coordinator, on Sept. 27 the project will likely begin with the demolition of the coal silo.

After the demolition work is complete on the silo, the EPA will take a look at the remaining buildings. The interconnected series of buildings that make up the property will be removed one by one.

Kish said it'll be the kind of weather Lockport has over the next couple of months that will determine how far into the winter season they can work. As the demolition moves forward, they will also look for places that would be a good stopping point for the year. The EPA hopes to work for six to eight weeks before stopping for the winter season.

Demolition work would then pick up again in the spring.

During demolition, the EPA's base of operation will stay at their current location at 89 Mill St. Kish said as things wind down at 89 Mill St., things will slowly wind up at the Flintkote Plant site.

As for 89 Mill St., Kish said the building has been completely demolished and "tidy up work" is now being completed.

"Largely, what we have to do is get rid of the debris we have generated," he said.

Kish said there is more sampling that needs to be completed and the disposal of a pile of material that is still on-site.

They are also waiting to learn the fate of a tunnel that is connected to the basement at 89 Mill St. The tunnel — which once fed steam and electricity — runs from the plant under the street.

When workers were able to get into the basement, they believed the room was closed off from the tunnel. But the tunnel was eventually found, hidden behind a set of stairs. Kish said workers are waiting for the results to determine if remediation of the tunnel is needed.

The building is owned by Liberty Plant Maintenance Inc. of Texas and is the location of a former power and steam generating building that serviced the paper industry operating in

the area. The building was constructed in the early 1920s and has not seen productivity since the 1970s.

The three-story brick and concrete building fell into disrepair, due to the building being open to the weather and the roof partially collapsing. The interior was contaminated by asbestos used to insulate components such as pipes and boilers. Eighty-nine Mill is a 1.5-acre parcel bounded by Mill, Clinton, Olcott and Chapel streets.

The final project for the EPA's work on the Eighteenmile Creek corridor in Lockport, is the buyouts of five homes on the Eighteenmile Creek side of Water Street.

Last year, soil, sod and stone fill was put down as a temporary fix to the contamination issues on Water Street.

EPA hired the Army Corps of Engineers last fall to handle the process, meet with residents and help them find a new place to live. The properties have been appraised by a company hired by the engineers and they are currently working on packages to offer to residents, based on what other homes in the area are going for. The residents will then get the opportunity to review the offer and negotiate.

The EPA would like to have residents relocated by February or March 2015.