

COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

**Luxora Elementary School
406 Washington Avenue
Luxora, Ark. (Mississippi County)
AFIN: 47-01122**



Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment
Division of Environmental Quality
Office of Land Resources, Brownfield Program

October 2025

1.0 Introduction

This community relations plan for the Luxora Elementary School asbestos abatement project describes the activities funded by the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment (E&E), Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Brownfield Program. The purpose of this community relations plan is to describe the strategy for addressing the concerns of residents potentially affected by activities conducted at the property.

2.0 Project Background

2.1 Site Location

The site is located at 406 Washington Avenue, Luxora, Ark. (Mississippi County) (Figure 1).

2.2 Previous Site Use(s)

The 5.53-acre site was used as a public school from the 1910s until 2014. Luxora Elementary School closed in 2014 and ownership was transferred to the City of Luxora in 2015.

Currently, the site contains three school buildings (Figure 2). Buildings A and C are used by the City of Luxora for community meetings and after-school programs. Building B contains asbestos-containing building materials and is not currently in use (Figure 3).

2.3 Previous Site Assessments

An ASTM International (formerly American Society for Testing and Materials) Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was completed by Environmental Science Services, Inc. in April 2024. The Phase I ESA identified no Recognized Environmental Conditions in connection with the site. However, the Phase I ESA identified the potential presence of asbestos and lead-based paint at the site based on the age of the school buildings, which were constructed prior to 1978.

An asbestos inspection was completed by Environmental Science Services, Inc. in September 2024. A total of 32 samples representing 12 homogenous areas were collected and submitted to EMSL Analytical Laboratories for analysis of bulk asbestos using polarized light microscopy. Multiple samples were broken into layers by the laboratory; therefore, 49 analyses were completed. The survey identified four homogenous areas of asbestos-containing building materials (materials containing greater than 1% asbestos) in

building materials in Building B only. The following approximate amounts of asbestos-containing building materials were identified at the site:

- 12,800 square feet (SF) of white 12x12 floor tile with black mastic throughout hallways and classrooms in Building B;
- 900 SF of sheetrock joint compound in the interior hallway of Building B;
- 1,600 SF of transite panels beneath exterior windows of Building B; and
- 13 white mudded pipe elbows in pipe fittings in the boiler room of Building B, with the chance of additional fittings present in pipe chases and wall cavities.

The floor tile, joint compound, and transite panels are considered Category I and Category II non-friable asbestos-containing building materials in their current condition and state. The pipe elbows are considered friable asbestos-containing building materials. All asbestos-containing building materials identified at the property was noted to be in fair to good condition at the time of the inspection.

A lead-based paint inspection was also completed by Environmental Science Services, Inc. in September 2024. Results of the inspection indicated that lead-based paint is not present in painted components associated with the property. Although not considered regulated, the presence of lead-containing paint below regulatory levels was identified on painted components. These painted components, if disturbed, may create a lead dust hazard or exposure issue for workers. Therefore, appropriate precautions should be taken when disturbing painted surfaces.

2.4 About Asbestos

Asbestos refers to a group of naturally occurring fibrous minerals that are extremely strong and heat- and fire-resistant. Because of these properties, asbestos was commonly used in construction and manufacturing for many years despite its dangerous health impacts.

Exposure to asbestos can occur through inhalation of asbestos fibers or by direct contact with the skin. Asbestos can cause serious health issues, including asbestosis, mesothelioma, and lung and stomach cancers. Symptoms of these diseases often develop years or decades after exposure.

Most asbestos-containing building materials and other consumer products were banned or phased out in the United States during the 1970s and 1980s; however, asbestos was not fully banned in the U.S. until 2024. Many older buildings that were constructed prior to the 1970s still contain asbestos.

Asbestos regulations differentiate between friable and non-friable asbestos-containing building materials. Friable materials are those that, when dry, can be crumbled, pulverized, or reduced to powder by hand pressure, potentially releasing asbestos fibers into the air. Non-friable materials cannot be damaged by hand pressure.

Non-friable asbestos-containing building materials are not harmful to human health when left intact and in good condition. When these materials deteriorate or are disturbed, however, asbestos fibers are released into the air. For this reason, renovations and demolitions of commercial buildings are regulated to prevent exposure to asbestos.

3.0 Community Relations Information

3.1 Community Profile

The City of Luxora is a small community of approximately 778 residents located in eastern Mississippi County in the northeastern portion of Arkansas. The city encompasses approximately 0.9 square miles and is located approximately 14 miles south of Blytheville and 5 miles northeast of Osceola. Luxora is bordered to the southeast by the Arkansas-Tennessee state line, which follows a side channel of the Mississippi River. U.S. Route 61 runs through the northwestern portion of the city.

3.2 Community Relations Objectives

The objective of this community relations plan is to inform the community of the asbestos abatement project and to address any questions or concerns that may arise.

3.3 Community Relations Activities

DEQ will issue a public notice of the proposed cleanup action for the site, asbestos abatement, in the *Osceola Times* newspaper and on the DEQ website:

<https://www.adeq.state.ar.us/hazwaste/programs/brownfield/>.

As stated in 8 CAR pt. 82, Brownfield Redevelopment, the public shall be provided notice of a proposed remedy at a brownfield site and given opportunity to comment and request a public hearing prior to DEQ making a final remedy determination.

Persons wishing to comment on the proposed Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA) may submit written comments, along with their name and mailing address, to DEQ by mail or by email. The period for submitting comments on the proposed ABCA

shall begin on the date of publication of the public notice and end at 4:30 p.m. on the 30th day after the publication date.

During the public comment period, the administrative record for the site, including all environmental assessments and plans, will be held at the Osceola Public Library at 320 West Hale Avenue, Osceola, AR 72370. The administrative record will also be on the DEQ website at the web address listed above.

The administrative record will consist of the following documents:

- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
- Phase II Environmental Site Assessment
- Community Relations Plan
- Draft Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives
- Draft Quality Assurance Project Plan

3.4 Ongoing Contacts

Members of the public may also contact the following spokespersons at E&E or the City of Osceola with questions or concerns regarding the asbestos abatement at the Luxora Elementary School.

The spokesperson for this project for the DEQ Brownfield Program is:

Addie McClain, Brownfield Program Coordinator
Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment, Division of Environmental Quality
5301 Northshore Drive, North Little Rock, AR 72118
Email: addie.mcclain@arkansas.gov
Phone: 501-682-0616

The spokesperson for the City of Luxora is:

Lee Charles Brown, Jr., Mayor
City of Luxora
204 North Main Street, Luxora, AR 72358
Email: leecharlesbrown@yahoo.com
Phone: 870-658-2233



Figure 1. Site Location
406 Washington Avenue
Luxora, Ark. (Mississippi County)



Figure 2. Site Boundaries
406 Washington Avenue
Luxora, Ark. (Mississippi County)

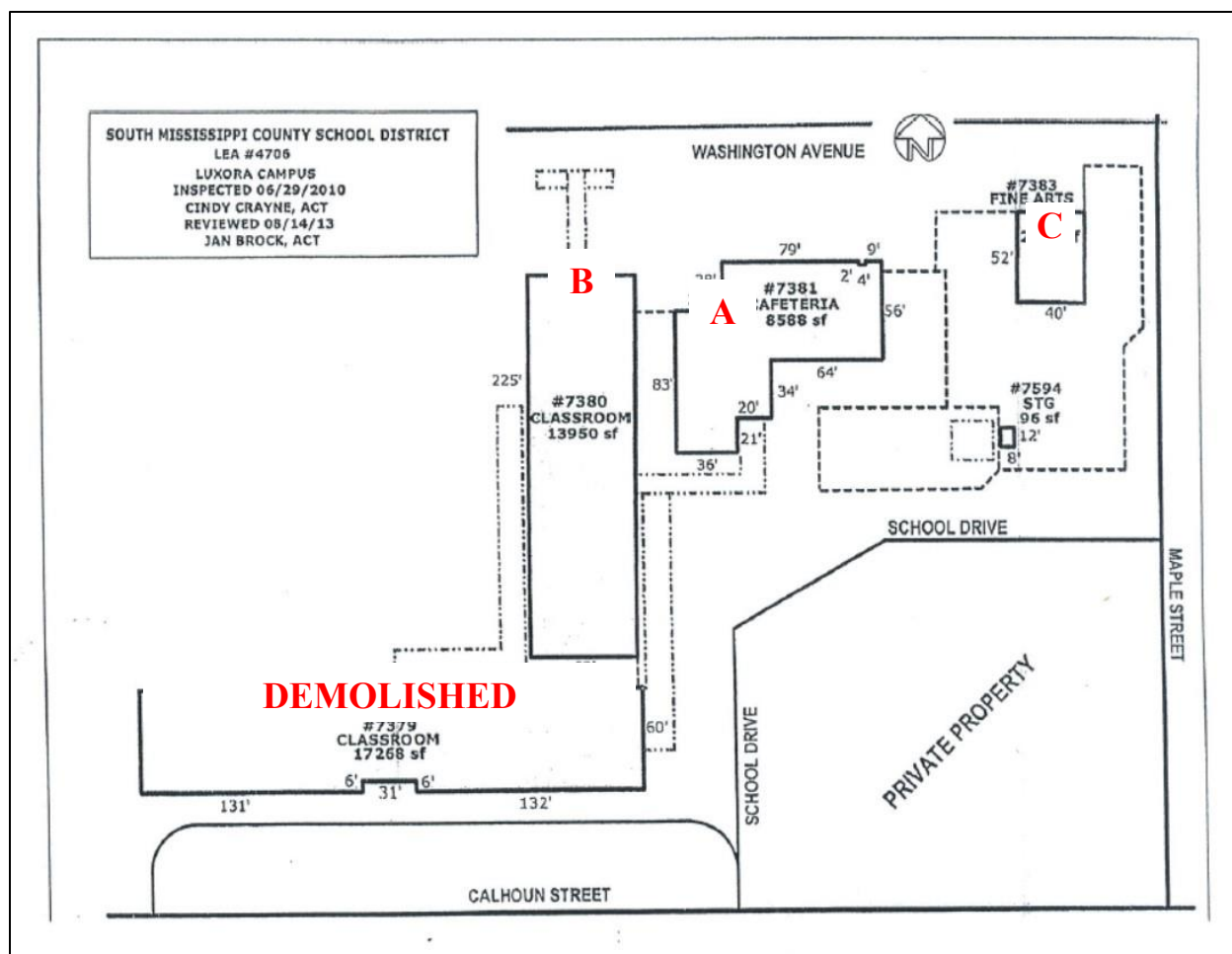


Figure 3. Site Layout
406 Washington Avenue
Luxora, Ark. (Mississippi County)