

Colorado Community Brownfields Workshop *empowering the community for better cleanups and redevelopment*



The image above is a locked test well at the Denver Toluene brownfields site in La Alma-Lincoln Park. The lock symbolizes the obstacles to community participation in the brownfields redevelopment process. If communities don't arm ourselves with information, decisions about our health will be made solely by the government, and decisions about our economic well-being will be made solely by developers.

What are *Brownfields* and how do we clean them up?

"Brownfields" are polluted sites that have a brighter future: cleaning them up can lead to more productive uses. After years of industrial activity such as manufacturing, mining or storage, the community wants something better.

Cleaning up a brownfield site may be expensive. Pollution may be spreading into the air, waterways or groundwater. The environment and people living or working near the site may be at risk. The source of the pollution, and how it got there, may be hard to find.

To make brownfields more attractive to developers, the EPA Brownfields Program, Colorado's Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCUP) and local governments each offer help in the form of grants, expedited approvals or tax breaks.

Community involvement

Development itself can be hard to grapple with. When brownfields are involved communities face even bigger challenges keeping informed about cleanup plans and understanding the health and environment implications. The **Colorado Community Brownfields Workshop**, held September 22, 2007 in Denver, will help community leaders learn the ropes of brownfields redevelopment. The workshop runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m at 2980 Curtis St. For information and registration, go to cocobrownfields.org or call **720-837-5446**.

Some other definitions of brownfields

The Environmental Protection Agency defines brownfields as: *real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.* (www.epa.gov/brownfields/glossary.htm)

Wikipedia defines "brownfield land" as: *abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contaminations.* (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brownfield_land)

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