

RIVERSIDE PARK

Oshkosh, Wisconsin
Assessment and Cleanup Grants

Former Manufacturing Gas Plant Developed into Public Performance Venue and Greenspace

ADDRESS:	10 Court Street, Oshkosh, WI 54901
PROPERTY SIZE:	7 acres
FORMER USE:	Wisconsin Public Service Manufacturing Gas Plant (coal gasification)
CURRENT USE:	Park, river walk, parking lot, and amphitheater with a performance pavilion and concession building
EPA GRANT RECIPIENT:	PROJECT PARTNERS:
The City of Oshkosh used \$55,000 of its Brownfields Assessment grant awarded in 2003 and a \$200,000 Brownfields Cleanup grant awarded in 2004.	Oshkosh Area Community Foundation, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Leach Family Foundation



For additional data and geographic information for this and other Brownfields Grants, please visit **EPA's Cleanups in My Community** - <http://iaspub.epa.gov/Cleanups/>

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

In the early to mid 1900s, the edge of the Fox River was the industrial center of Oshkosh. From 1868 to 1950 Wisconsin Public Service (WPS, originally the Oshkosh Gas Light Co.) converted coal into gas, through coal gasification in this industrial area. The resulting new energy source was welcomed by residents and businesses that used the gas to replace other, less efficient fuels. Over its years of operation, the plant produced coal tar, a by-product of the coal gasification process, which infiltrated the property's soil and ground water. In 1950, a pipeline was built to transport natural gas into the city, rendering the facility obsolete. WPS performed a cleanup of the site in 2002, using thermal treatment and capping, and the city purchased the property in December 2003. The city used an EPA Brownfields Cleanup grant to enable reuse of the property as a park. EPA funds were used to reconstruct the environmental cap and pave the parking lot as an engineered control.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- With assistance from an EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant awarded to the City, the environmental cap was essentially removed, the surface of the waste re-graded and an improved cap installed.
- Designed and constructed innovative trench system to allow tree plantings to be incorporated in the park design without impacting the integrity of the environmental cap.
- Leveraged more than \$4 million in funding from public and private sources.

OUTCOME:

Riverside Park is currently a recreational and entertainment hub for Oshkosh residents. Its public Leach Amphitheater (with capacity for 7,000) hosts large summer concerts including the annual Waterfest, which draws over 60,000 visitors, as well as other sporting events like the Oshkosh half-marathon. The City of Oshkosh leveraged more than \$4 million in public and private donations to make this redevelopment possible. Sources of funding for this project include the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' Greenspace and Public Facilities Grant, Capitol Improvement Program funding, and more than \$2 million in private donations.



Musical group the BoDeans play to a packed house at the Leach Amphitheater.