

Seaholm Power Plant Cleanup, Austin, Texas

Site Description: The Seaholm Power Plant was an Austin city-owned power generation facility that sat on an eight-acre site on the north shore of Town Lake in downtown Austin, Texas.

Background: The plant was constructed in two phases, in 1950 and 1955. It operated as a power plant for the city until 1991. In 1996, the Austin City Council authorized the decommissioning of the plant and agreed to preserve the Seaholm Power Plant for public use after it was decommissioned.

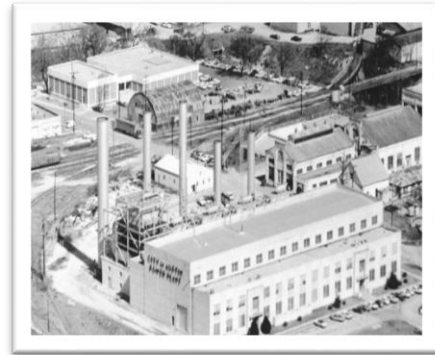


Figure 1: Seaholm Power Plant

Contamination: Sampling identified soil contamination from PCBs, semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), arsenic, and lead. During the initial remedial action, 30,000 cubic yards of waste was removed from the site. Following that action, confirmation soil sampling in the plant's laydown yard showed PCBs at more than 50 mg/kg. PCB contamination also existed in the concrete floors in the plant's turbine building.

Cleanup: The remediation of the Seaholm Power Plant site was accomplished through close cooperation between EPA's cleanup programs (PCB Cleanup and Disposal Program, RCRA Corrective Action, and Brownfields), the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), and the city of Austin. EPA was also able to negotiate an innovative way to address some of the PCB-contaminated floors by covering the floor with fiber-reinforced epoxy.



Figure 2: Seaholm Power Plant redevelopment project.

After the successful excavation, removal, and disposal of the PCB-contaminated soils, TCEQ issued a Certificate of Completion. In 2006, TCEQ and EPA deemed Seaholm "Ready for Reuse." The Seaholm plant was the first facility nationwide to receive this designation under TSCA after a nine-year, \$13 million cleanup of PCBs and other hazardous materials.

In the years that followed the cleanup, a \$130 million re-development investment has created 143,151 square feet of office space; 280 high-rise condos; and 48,363 square feet of retail shops, restaurants, and meeting space — all surrounding a dramatic and accessible plaza.