



The Joliet Arsenal Development Authority (JADA) was established by the State of Illinois pursuant to the Illinois Land Conservation Act of 1995. When JOAAP was decommissioned, Will County lost a major employer for its citizens. The mission of JADA was to facilitate and promote the reuse of 3,000 acres of JOAAP land with diversified projects and land uses that would create new job opportunities and foster new economic development within the area of Will County.

The location of JOAAP was originally selected because it was adjacent to a major railroad line and within commuting distance for a large pool of skilled labor in Chicago. These same features still make the property a great location to site a business. The first transfer of land from the Army to JADA occurred in 2000 and by 2005 JADA was successfully transforming JOAAP property into manufacturing and distribution business parks. The 1,500-acre CenterPoint Intermodal Center provides connection for multiple rail companies and the 770-acre ProLogis Park Arsenal features 12 million square feet of distribution space. The park also includes the 1,100-acre Island City Industrial Park, and the 300-acre International Union of Operating Engineers-Local 150 Apprenticeship and Skill Improvement Training Facility.

As of 2008, it is estimated that 1,770 construction jobs and 1,755 permanent jobs have been created as a result of the transfer and redevelopment of the 3,000 acres of land transferred to JADA.



In 2002, 455 acres were deeded to Will County and IEPA granted authorization for Prairie View Landfill to begin operating in 2004. The Prairie View Landfill accepts non-hazardous municipal solid wastes and uses the latest landfill technology to be protective of the environment. These technologies include a leachate collection system, composite liner, ground water monitoring system, and surface water and gas management systems. There are also plans to install a system to capture and use the methane gas produced by decomposition in the landfill to generate electricity at the facility. It is expected that the landfill will serve the needs of the community into 2027.

**For more information, call or write:**

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## Collaboration Leads to Early Cleanup Completion Joliet Army Ammunition Plant



JOAAP Restoration Advisory Board

**The former Joliet Army Ammunition Plant (JOAAP)—one of the largest and most productive ordnance complexes ever built—has a new identity as the Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie, Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, Prairie View Landfill, and several state-of-the-art manufacturing and distribution business parks. After extensive environmental investigation and cleanup, and close collaboration between federal, state, and local governments, community groups, and the private sector, the cleanup of JOAAP was completed in early 2008 – three years ahead of schedule.**

### HISTORY



The 36-square mile JOAAP is located 40 miles southwest of Chicago in Will County, Illinois and was the site of vital operations in the protection and promotion of American welfare and security during World War II. Operations began in 1940 with the United States' entrance into the war. During World War II and the Korean and Vietnam Wars, JOAAP was used for the manufacture, loading, assembling, packaging and shipping of bombs, projectiles, fuses and supplementary charges. The plant was divided into two main areas based on operations: the 14-square mile Manufacturing Area and the 22-square mile Load, Assemble and Package Area.

Activities at the Manufacturing Area included the production of chemical constituents of munitions, propellants and explosives, such as TNT and DNT, and an extensive explosives storage facility. It is estimated that up to 57 percent of the Army's TNT was produced at the Manufacturing Area at JOAAP. Munitions were loaded, assembled and packaged for shipping at the 22-square mile Load, Assemble and Package Area. The plant served as a major local employer – employing over 20,000 people at the height of production in the 1940s and employing 8,000 people in the 1960s. As production declined, JOAAP was decommissioned in 1976 and by 1977 all production stopped. In 1993, the Army declared JOAAP excess property and maintained a minimal staff at the installation.



## CLEANUP

In 1978, subsequent to the halt of operations at JOAAP, the U.S. Army Environmental Command Environmental Assessment identified 53 areas of concern and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) commenced a Preliminary Assessment to determine areas requiring further investigation.

The Manufacturing Area and the Load, Assemble and Package Area were listed on U.S. EPA's National Priorities List (NPL) in 1987 and 1989, respectively. Subsequently, a Federal Facilities Agreement was signed between the Army, U.S. EPA and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to develop and coordinate environmental assessment and cleanup activities at JOAAP. The Federal Facilities Agreement initiated relationships that were critical to the cleanup process and remained strong over the next 17 years. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Louisville District managed remedial design and construction efforts that included: excavation and treatment or disposal of contaminated soils; capping of three landfills; excavation and disposal of two ash piles; monitoring of the natural attenuation of ground water; and investigation, removal and disposal of munitions and explosives-related devices and debris.



As part of the cleanup, 280,000 tons of explosive-contaminated soil was treated at a bioremediation facility constructed on-site. The soil underwent an average 32-day process of bacterial bioremediation and the treated soil was then used to restore grade and drainage at numerous areas around JOAAP. Approximately 120,000 tons of non-explosive-contaminated soil and 487,000 tons of ash were excavated and disposed appropriately off-site. Additionally, more than 8,100 munitions and explosive-related items were removed and disposed. Natural attenuation of ground water at the site continues to be monitored.

## REUSE

With the 1993 Army declaration that JOAAP was excess property, the 24-person Joliet Arsenal Citizens Planning Commission assembled to develop a reuse plan for the JOAAP property that would be both complementary to the needs and desires of the local community and appropriate for the protection of human health and the environment. The commission included representatives from federal, state and local government and non-government organizations. A reuse plan served as the basis for the Illinois Land Conservation Act of 1995, which authorized the cleanup and transfer of 19,100 acres of the JOAAP property to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service to establish the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie. The remaining acreage was cleaned up and transferred as follows:



- 982 acres to the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery
- 455 acres to Will County for the Prairie View Landfill
- 3,000 acres to the State of Illinois for several business parks: CenterPoint Intermodal Center, ProLogis Park Arsenal, Island City Industrial Park, and an engineer Apprenticeship and Skill Improvement Center

In 1995, the JOAAP Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) was established to ensure community involvement and participation in the cleanup and reuse plans for JOAAP. Composed of community members representative of the diverse local interests, the JOAAP RAB met regularly over the next ten years, from January 1996 until September 2007, and provided vital input throughout the cleanup process.

With the combined efforts of many parties with an interest in JOAAP, the cleanup and reuse plans established an integrated approach to addressing the Manufacturing Area and the Load, Assemble and Package Area simultaneously. This approach helped achieve a coordinated and ultimately more efficient process, as cleanup could be tailored to the future use of the area. Including the community early and often ensured consideration of their needs and promoted local support for the planned reuse.

## Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie



Named for a local Potawatomi word meaning "Grand Medicine Society", the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie was established in 1996 and is the first national tallgrass prairie in the country. The first transfer of JOAAP land was completed in 1997 when 15,080 acres of lands that did not require cleanup were transferred to the auspices of the U.S. Forest Service. Subsequent land transfers occurred as the remediation process progressed.

The ecological value of the JOAAP property was established through surveys contracted by the Department of Defense and conducted by the Nature Conservancy and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources in 1993. It is estimated that less than one percent of native Illinois prairies remain intact today, highlighting the significance of this protected land.

When first transferred, less than three percent of the acreage was undisturbed and contained native vegetation. As specified under the Illinois Land Conservation Act of 1995 establishing the

national prairie, the Midewin Land and Resource Management Plan was completed in 2002 as an outline to restore the prairie habitat and provide opportunities for research, education and recreation.

## Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery



In 1999, the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery was dedicated as the 117th Department of Veterans Affairs national cemetery. When fully developed, this 982-acre cemetery will provide 400,000 burial spaces; a public information center; three committal service shelters; and a carillon and Kiosk grave locator. The Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery also features a memorial walk that commemorates soldiers of 20th century wars on 11 memorials.

Congressman George E. Sangmeister, a veteran of the Korean War, served as a representative and senator in the State of Illinois, 1973-87, and a U.S. Representative from Illinois, 1988-95. He was instrumental in the acquisition of 982 acres from the former Joliet Arsenal and its redevelopment as Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery.