



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Gateway  
National Recreation Area

Public Affairs Office  
210 New York Avenue  
Staten Island, NY 10305

718-354-4606 phone  
718-354-4605 fax

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## Gateway News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Raina T. Williams

Phone number: 718-354-4606

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### **Contract Awarded for First Phase of a Multi-Year Effort to Remediate Contamination at Great Kills Park, Staten Island**

Cabrera Services has been awarded a contract by Gateway National Recreation Area, through an Inter-Agency Agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to investigate contamination at Great Kills Park. This investigation is a critical step in the cleanup of the park, a former landfill where radiological contamination has been identified. Hazardous substances found at the site include Radium-226, a radionuclide used in medical treatments. As prescribed by federal law, Cabrera Services will prepare and complete several plans before on-site cleanup can begin.

“As much as we here at Gateway want to reopen all of Great Kills Park, the safety of the community and our employees must come first,” said Superintendent Linda Canzanelli. “Careful planning is critically important so that the park can remedy contamination correctly and completely,” Canzanelli said. “The best way for Gateway to serve and protect the community is to get this process right the first time.” Over 200 acres of the park have been closed to the public while the process continues.

The [Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act \(CERCLA\)](#), commonly known as the Superfund law, defines the process for cleaning up hazardous substances. This federal law details the steps required in the [cleanup process](#) from sampling protocols to community involvement to remediation.

Direct contact with one of the radium sources for one hour would be equivalent to more than five times the amount of radiation an individual might normally be exposed to in one calendar year. As one increases the distance from the source of radiation, the risk drops. Although the sources found at the Site were 12 to 18 inches below the ground, as a precaution, visitor access to 223 acres remains closed until investigation and cleanup efforts conclude. These areas include athletic fields, the Model Airplane Field, and the fishing area near Great Kills Harbor. The sports leagues that use the athletic fields were given the opportunity to relocate to Miller Field.

The contamination was first noticed in 2005 when the New York City Police Department notified the NPS of an unexplained reading of “above background” radiation at Great Kills Park. Although the reading was described as a relatively low level, Gateway fenced off the affected areas to investigate further.

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The first step of the cleanup in August 2007 was the [Preliminary Assessment and Site Inspection Report](#) developed by the NPS. Five isolated “hot spots” were identified. Seven more areas were located in 2009, when excavation work removed two highly radioactive sources and three 55-gallon drums of low-level radioactive soil.

In the last two years, funding was secured to enable the NPS to fully characterize the Site consistent with applicable laws and regulations. Concurrently, NPS began an investigation to determine the parties responsible for the contamination. Once identified, these parties will be contacted regarding their legal obligations at the Site. NPS has established an Administrative Record (AR) that is now available for public review. The AR, which is located both at the local public library near Great Kills Park and at Gateway Headquarters at Fort Wadsworth, contains documents that will be considered in selecting the site cleanup action. Documents will be added to the AR as site investigation and planning progresses.

Once funding was secured, NPS began the contracting process to hire a technical support contractor. In April 2011, Cabrera Services was selected to provide that support and will develop, among other things, an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis Work Plan. This work plan will describe the steps necessary to fully investigate the nature and extent of contamination and to analyze an array of cleanup alternatives. A health and safety plan will also be developed to ensure the protection of park visitors, employees and emergency responders while the investigation and cleanup selection process is underway.

A Community Involvement Plan will encourage two-way dialogue between the park and local officials, residents, and interested community members and will develop ways for citizens to become involved in both the decision-making process and in cleanup activities. In the meantime, written comments related to the site can be mailed to Office of the Environmental Protection Specialist, Gateway Headquarters, 210 New York Avenue, Staten Island, New York 10305.

Once these plans have been created, an Action Memorandum will explain which cleanup alternatives will be used to clean up the contaminated area.

“We all look forward to the day when Great Kills Park will be wide open once again,” said Canzanelli. “This park belongs to the people, and the people who enjoy this park need to be safe from any harm—even harm that we cannot see.”

### *About Gateway National Recreation Area*

Established in 1972, Gateway National Recreation Area has more than 26,000 acres of marshes, wildlife sanctuaries and recreational athletic facilities, miles of sandy beaches; indoor and outdoor classrooms; picnicking and camping areas, as well as historic structures and military installations, airfields, a lighthouse, and adjacent waters around New York harbor. The park offers urban residents in two states a wide range of recreational opportunities year round. With more than nine million visitors a year, it is the third most visited national park in the country. For information about Gateway or to find out about our upcoming public programs, visit the park's Web site at <http://www.nps.gov/gate/index.htm>

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