



# DEC investigating cadmium traces at West Islip Superfund site

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The state Department of Environmental Conservation is investigating contamination at the shuttered Dzus Fastener Co. Inc. in West Islip. Traces of the carcinogen cadmium have been found in sediment, according to the DEC. Photo Credit: Ed Betz

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Carcinogen resurfaces at Dzus Fastener Co. in West Islip
- State says it will sample properties near Willetts Creek

The state has launched an investigation into the renewed presence of the carcinogen cadmium at a West Islip Superfund site that has undergone decades of remediation for groundwater and soil contamination.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation announced this week that the agency will “soon begin to sample properties” near Willetts Creek where cadmium traces from the former Dzus Fastener Co. at 425 Union Blvd. were found in 2013 during routine monitoring.

“DEC is dedicated to working with the West Islip community to expediently remove cadmium contamination which originated from the Dzus Fastener Co. Inc. site,” said agency spokeswoman Aphrodite Montalvo in an email statement. “DEC has been contacting landowners in potentially affected areas to take soil samples and fully delineate where contamination still exists. We are thankful to the community for their cooperation and we continue to work toward a speedy and comprehensive remediation.”

The investigation will focus on sampling creek sediment for levels of cadmium in areas south of Union Boulevard, Lake Capri and sections of the tidal portion of Willetts Creek south of Montauk Highway. West Islip High School and Beach Street Middle School abut Willetts Creek.

The one-acre Dzus Fastener site operated as a manufacturer of metal fasteners from 1937 until 2015. The DEC began investigating the site in the 1980s and found cadmium, chromium, cyanide and organic compounds in the soil and groundwater.

In February, the DEC announced that the site had been reclassified from a closed status to one that indicated a significant threat to public health or the environment. The cadmium contamination was likely from leaching pools that had been removed as part of site remediation and may have been stirred up by flooding from superstorm Sandy in October 2012, the DEC said.

Dzus changed its name to DFCI Solutions Inc. in 2001 and still owns the property, records show.

The site is also being prepared for development in a separate action. In January, 425 Union Blvd. Associates LLC submitted an application to rezone the parcel and for various special permits for a proposed QuickChek store and gas station, a fast-food restaurant and a retail building. The application is pending until the remediation plans are complete, according to Islip town officials.

State Sen. Phil Boyle (R-Bay Shore), who held a public forum about the site in March, said “we’re happy the DEC is taking the next steps towards remediation. They told us at the forum they were going to start with the houses that border the creek, and so far we’re pleased with the steps they’re taking. We’re going to make sure the remediation continues as quickly as possible.”