

## Tar Ponds and Coke Ovens Cleanup Marks Major Milestone

Sydney Tar Ponds Agency

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The people of Sydney will soon be able to enjoy more of their downtown as remediation of the Tar Ponds and Coke Ovens nears completion, reclaiming nearly 99 hectares of industrial land.

The government of Canada and the province announced today, Dec. 13, that the process to contain contaminants in cement in the former north and south Sydney Tar Ponds has been completed, marking a final stage of the cleanup.

As the project nears completion, the province will begin taking ownership of the remediated sites.

"A new life and legacy is taking shape on the former Sydney steel site lands," said Maurice Smith, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. "Remediation is winding down and future site use construction is gearing up, to make this space a safe and beautiful place for generations of Cape Bretoners to enjoy."

Rona Ambrose, Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada and Status of Women, said the site has been successfully remediated in a manner that is protective of human health and the environment.

"The government of Canada congratulates the Sydney Tar Ponds Agency and the local companies and their employees who have worked so hard on this important cleanup," said Ms. Ambrose. "We look forward to seeing local companies leverage their new skills to continue building on the economic growth that this project has brought to Cape Breton."

The process of solidification and stabilization used to remediate the former Sydney Tar Ponds involved mixing the contaminated sediment with cement to bind any hazardous material in place and to prevent it from escaping into the environment.

In total, 871,650 tonnes of contaminated material have been successfully contained - the equivalent of stacking up 112 football fields, each one a metre deep.

The treated sediment passed the performance criteria. An engineered cap was then built on top of it, with a protective cover made of clay and other materials.

Work began in October to build a large park on top of the former Tar Ponds site and a green space for light industrial use on the former Coke Ovens property. The new park is on track to be completed and open to the public in fall 2013.

The clean-up project remains within its \$400 million budget and is on schedule for completion by March 2014.

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FOR BROADCAST USE:

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