

Bankruptcy Over! Requirements met partially. Operations allowed to move forward. What about the arsenic found? Will the DNR complete its studies and involve the public and most of all, clean up ground and surface water in the areas where frac sand mining, processing and trans-load occur?



*.....keeping watch on
the industry*

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**Superior Silica Sands in the Town of New Auburn,
an idled mine, due to suspension of operations by
Chippewa Co.-July, 2019**

Emerge Energy Services or Superior Silica Sands filed for bankruptcy in July, 2019. Uncertainty for the future of 5 frac sand mines in Chippewa and Barron Counties hung over the horizon. In October of 2019, Dan Masterpole from the Chippewa County Land Conservation and Forest Management Department appeared before a federal bankruptcy court. Superior Silica Sands' mining permit had been suspended because the company failed to install monitoring wells and also failed to pay the 2018 and 2019 assessments for reclamation. In addition, elevated levels of arsenic and other heavy metals have been found in the mud from the waste water ponds and the W-DNR was requested to become involved. In 2016, the DNR had committed itself to a scientific heavy metals/water study, but as of 2019 Roberta Walls indicated that the State had not yet started their study due to a lack of funds. The results of the study was to be available to the public in 2021.

With the findings of heavy metals in the containment ponds, the study was put on fast-forward.

While the scientific study of heavy metals in the storm water and wastewater containment ponds throughout the State of Wisconsin has now begun, it is not certain when the investigative work will be completed fully. Chippewa County has promised

there would be a public meeting with all parties involved soon to find out more about the issues related to the Superior Silica Sands site in Chippewa County.

Rich Kremer from Wisconsin Public Radio has reported out the information about Superior Silica Sands being back in compliance with the county's expectations. The story can be found at the following link:

https://www.wpr.org/frac-sand-company-emerges-bankruptcy-back-compliance-chippewa-county?utm_source=WPR+News+%26+Program+Newletters&utm_campaign=cba1971fbc-WPR+Morning+News&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cef131bb2-cba1971fbc-299438695

During the Chippewa County Board meeting held on March 10, 2020, a letter from Dan Masterpole to Superior Silica Sands and Rick Shearer, CEO, was distributed to the County Board Members. It can be found in

[this document](#)

It acknowledged that the assessments or "financial assurances" were paid, the monitoring wells were installed, and that the company was in

compliance. There was no mention of the heavy metals component which is really the responsibility of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

A public meeting is planned for the future. However, with the pandemic, the date of that meeting is unknown at this time. It appears that the W-DNR requires more time to complete its study. Earlier this week, the price of a barrel of crude oil was below zero. In today's Leader Telegram, the price per barrel was \$16.94 when the market ended on 4-24-2020, far below the \$50.00 minimum required by the heavy hydraulic fracturing industry to produce any income. It appears that this industry is very volatile with busts and booms and a future that is being planned by people all over the world to create self sustainable energy for a clean and healthy environment. Frac sand is used with a mixture of water and other chemicals to do a successful "frac" in the industry. At least 100 rail cars are required in order for a successful frac. With railroad costs being high, it is truly questionable whether or not the oilfields can afford to transport frac sand out of Wisconsin to distant locations. Investors in any components of this industry should be very wary of their involvement at this time or any time in the future.

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Welcome to the Frac Sand Sentinel, a newsletter highlighting resource links, news media accounts, blog posts, correspondence, observations and opinions gathered regarding local actions on, and impacts of, the developing frac sand mining and processing industries.

The content of this newsletter is for informational purposes only. The editor of the Frac Sand Sentinel does not accept any responsibility or liability for the use or misuse of the content of this newsletter or reliance by any persons on the newsletters contents.

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE: CCC-WIS.COM and for additional information, [click here](#) for panoramic aerial views of frac sand mines, processing plants, and trans-load facilities. FracTracker.org is also an excellent source of information.