

Old Tazlina Laundromat Site



Introduction

The Old Tazlina Laundromat site is a 2.9-acre property located along Laundromat Road near Milepost 104.25 of the Old Richardson Highway in Copper Center, Alaska. The site lies north of the Native Village of Kluti-Kaah and south of Silver Springs, within Section 36, Township 1 North, Range 1 West of the Copper River Meridian. The parcel includes a 2,814-square-foot main laundromat structure, a 250-square-foot storage shed to the northwest, and is enclosed by a metal fence.



The property is owned by Ahtna, Inc. and is surrounded by additional Ahtna, Inc. lands. It is situated in a mixed-use area of Copper Center with residential, commercial, and undeveloped forested land nearby.



History



The Old Tazlina Laundromat property was acquired in 1979 by Tazlina Incorporated through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) and became part of Ahtna, Inc. after a 1980 merger. A laundromat structure was built in 1983 and operated by Copper Center Safe Water until the mid-1990s, when it was abandoned.

During its operation, the site faced water quality and infrastructure issues, raising concerns about contamination from industrial water use, chemicals, buried tanks, and fuel lines. In 2017, the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission (AITRC) temporarily used the property for moose calf rehabilitation. However, the property has since returned to a vacant and unused state.

Previous Activities

2024 Phase I and limited Phase II ESA

In summer 2024, as part of the Copper River Native Association's TCS Environmental Program, environmental investigations at the Old Tazlina Laundromat site included a Phase I ESA, a hazardous building materials (HBM) survey, and a Phase II ESA. The Phase I ESA identified six recognized environmental conditions (RECs), including aboveground storage tanks, buried piping, a suspected floor drain, improperly stored containers, and paint chip-contaminated soil.





The HBM survey found no asbestos-containing materials, lead-based paint, or PCBs above regulatory thresholds, though additional testing is recommended prior to demolition. The Phase II ESA concluded that no petroleum hydrocarbons, metals (except naturally occurring arsenic), or other contaminants exceeded ADEC cleanup levels in surface soils. However, significant data gaps remain, particularly beneath the floor drain and buried fuel line, and no groundwater testing has been conducted. Further investigation is recommended to assess subsurface conditions, groundwater quality, and the status of unknown container contents.

2025 Full Phase II ESA and ABCA

In 2025, as part of the Copper River Native Association's TCS Environmental Program, additional environmental investigations were conducted at the Old Tazlina Laundromat site, including a full Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), a hazardous building materials (HBM) survey, and development of an Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives (ABCA). Field activities included site reconnaissance, geophysical surveying using ground-penetrating radar (GPR), and the collection of surface and subsurface soil samples, as well as groundwater sampling from an on-site well.



The HBM survey confirmed that no asbestos-containing materials, lead-based paint, or PCB-containing materials exceeded regulatory thresholds, although two unlabeled light ballasts were identified as potential PCB sources. Soil sampling identified localized contamination near the sanitary system manhole, buried fuel line, and interior floor drain, while the remainder of the site soils and groundwater met Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) cleanup levels.

Current Activities

Cleanup activities are anticipated to take place in summer 2026. The specific scope, methods, and extent of the work are still under evaluation and will be determined based on site conditions and planning efforts.



Revitalization



Following cleanup, the site is expected to support future community use while reflecting the Native Village of Tazlina and Ahtna, Inc.'s commitment to protecting human health and the surrounding environment. As stewards of the land, they are committed to addressing hazardous contamination to ensure the property is safe, stable, and suitable for long-term use. The existing structure provides an opportunity to meet community needs, with specific uses to be determined in coordination with local stakeholders. This flexible approach aligns with community priorities, supports environmental stewardship, and allows the site to serve as a safe and productive asset moving forward.