



Damen Silos Demolition FAQ Document | July 2025

GENERAL INFORMATION

Overview

- The Damen Silos sit on a 23-acre site located at 2900 South Damen Avenue owned by MAT Limited Partnership, which purchased the property from the Statue of Illinois in 2022 for \$6.5 million.
- The site owner has submitted five (5) demolition permit applications for five structures reviewed by the Chicago Department of Buildings (DOB) and Department of Public Health (CDPH).
- Due to the size of the site and its proximity to the river, the demolition is qualified as an [environmentally complex demolition](#).
- The site owner has not determined future use of the site.

Background

- The Damen Silos have been around for at least 100 years, used to service grain when those activities happened. The State took over the site around 1920s.
- In its Bid for Invitation, the State of Illinois stated that the Damen Silos were “unsalvable” and of “no positive value.” The State did not perform any preventative maintenance or repair work on the silos for decades.
- The property owner is required to work with the Army Corps of Engineers and the State Historical Preservation Office based on its Memorandum of Agreement for historical preservation.
- The Silos have been out of operation since the 1970s.

OVERVIEW OF DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR DEMOLITION

The Chicago Department of Buildings (DOB)

DOB is responsible for ensuring the demolition contractor is following the provisions of the Chicago Construction Code Section 14B-33-3303. This includes but is not limited to the method of demolition conducted and ensuring that the contractor performs demolition in a structurally safe and sound manner. DOB inspectors can halt the demolition if the proper required procedures are not followed.

The Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH)

CDPH is responsible for protecting human health and the environment. When a demolition is deemed environmentally complex, the City of Chicago requires more stringent review and public engagement regarding the demolition impacts as part of the permitting process. Two major components of CDPH's application review process include the air monitoring and dust control plans. During demolition, CDPH is charged with the environmental-related oversight of the demolition activities, and inspectors can halt the demolition if the proper required procedures are not followed.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)



As the entity with primary jurisdiction over the Chicago River, the USACE defines the measures required to protect the waterway during demolition.

Please contact [USACE Chicago District](#) Regulatory Specialist Lyn Nitz-Mercaeant with specific questions regarding the role of the USACE and the Memorandum of Agreement: Linda.C.Nitz-Mercaeant@usace.army.mil or 312-846-5512

DEMOLITION – DOB

Who is the demolition contractor?

- [Heneghan Wrecking Company](#)

What oversight is the City providing during the demolition?

- Inspectors from the Chicago Departments of Buildings and Public Health will be on site for the entirety of the demolition.

When does the demolition start?

- Monday, July 14, 2025

What is the approximate duration of the demolition?

- 6 months, weather dependent

What are the five structures undergoing demolition?

- Two Ten-Story Concrete Bundled-Silos
- Two-Story Masonry Building
- One-Story Pre-Engineered Metal Structure
- One-Story Pre-Engineered Metal Building

What is the method of demolition?

- The demolition of this entire site will be mechanical demolition; **NO** explosives will be used.
- Building One is an 80-foot concrete silo with a 110 feet tall tower and Building Two is a 80foot concrete silo will be demolished utilizing cranes and high-reach excavators with breakers attached. Barges placed alongside the North and East elevations adjacent to the structures to protect waterways from debris.
- Building Three is a two-story masonry building and Buildings Four and Five are pre-engineered metal buildings will be demolished using excavators with grapples and buckets.
- All buildings are shown and numbered in APPENDIX A.
- Per the Chicago Construction Codes SECTION 3303 DEMOLITION states the following:
 - **3303.1 Procedure.** Demolition of any building or structure shall begin at the top thereof, and each story shall be completely razed or demolished and the material therefrom completely removed before demolition work begins on the next lower story, unless an alternative procedure is approved by the building official.



- **3303.3 Means of egress.** A horizontal exit shall not be destroyed unless and until a substitute means of egress has been provided.
- **3303.4 Filling and grading.** Where a structure has been demolished or removed, the vacant lot shall be filled, where necessary, with clean soil, cinders, or other inorganic material and graded to a level not lower than and not more than 12 inches (305 mm) above the level of sidewalks, alleys, or adjoining property, with proper allowance for settlement.
- **3303.5 Water accumulation.** Provision shall be made to prevent the accumulation of water or damage to any foundations on the premises or the adjoining property.
- **3303.7 Fire safety during demolition.** Fire safety during demolition shall comply with the applicable requirements of this chapter.
- **3303.8 Debris removal.** Debris from the demolition of a building or structure shall be removed from the site as demolition progresses. Salvaged material, if left on the site, shall be neatly stored.

What happens if something falls in the water?

- The Departments of Buildings and Public Health Inspectors onsite will immediately issue an order to stop all demolition; we will contact the City of Chicago Department of Transportation who is the Harbor Master for the City of Chicago, they will contact the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding the incident as the river is under their jurisdiction.
- Although the USACE has primary jurisdiction over the Chicago River, CDPH will be ready to stop demolition if material is going into the river and will be ready to issue tickets if necessary.
- Demolition will not resume until the contractor has addressed all of the USACE requirements as well as modifying any plans requested by DOB and/or CDPH.

What constitutes an immediate stoppage of demolition from DOB?

- In the event the contractor encounters an unknown condition the DOB inspector on site will immediately stop the demolition process and will evaluate the condition to reassess the demolition plan.

How are we ensuring the barges catch the debris despite the “gap”?

- Heneghan Wrecking will install steel plating affixed from Building One and Building Three to the barge, as a measure to prevent debris from entering the waterway. The DOB inspectors will verify the steel plates have been properly installed, prior to the start of demolition of Building One and Building Three.

Where will be the debris be transported following the demolition?

- Contractors are required to recycle or reuse at least 50% of uncontaminated construction and demolition debris. All debris will be sent to approved disposal facilities.



How are we stopping water from the demolition running off into the river?

- The underlying material is a sand/soil combination, which will facilitate absorption of the water used to suppress dust into the ground rather than collecting on the surface and potentially contributing to runoff.
- Sawdust booms will also be used to collect any runoff that results from wetting of the dust or rain.

What are the penalties of failure?

- CDPH issues tickets for violations when necessary, such as dust leaving the site, debris falling into the river, or mismanagement of materials. Fees range based on the nature of the violation.

What are the different requirements from DOB for complex demolition?

- Complex demolitions require enhanced documentation and oversight beyond regular demolition permits. In addition to standard demolition permit requirements, complex demolitions must submit three additional items with their permit application: (1) current survey, (2) professional structural report, and (3) safety and Operations Plan as outlined per the Chicago Construction Code **14A-4-407.2.1.2 Complex demolition which states:**
 - A *permit* application for *complex demolition* must include:
 1. A current survey marked with the horizontal distances between *buildings* or structures to be demolished, *property lines*, and *buildings* on the site that will not be demolished.
 2. A report documenting the structural condition of the *building* or structure to be demolished and describing the methods to be used in the demolition or deconstruction. The report must be prepared, signed, and sealed by a *registered design professional*.
 3. A written safety and operations plan, prepared by the demolition contractor or a *registered design professional*, describing how the project will comply with applicable requirements of Chapter 33 of the *Chicago Building Code*.

AIR MONITORING & DUST MITIGATION – CDPH

What constitutes an immediate stoppage of demolition from CDPH?

- An immediate work stoppage may be temporary until the issues are resolved. Examples include:
 - Material falling into the water
 - Weather conditions, such as large, multiple, unexpected gusts of wind
 - PM10 thresholds exceeded based on the air monitoring
 - Visible dust leaving the site.

How is CDPH monitoring air quality? What equipment is being used?

- Four (4) portable air monitoring stations will be used for the real-time air monitoring system.



- Each station will include one (1) DustTrak Environmental Monitor equipped with PM10 impactor kits and one (1) meteorological sensor, among other items.
- During demolition activities, each PAM station will calculate 15-minute block averages. A central computer will compare these measurements to the Alert and Action Levels and provide notification to field staff of elevated values when necessary.
- The air monitoring plan involves air monitoring of existing conditions, conditions during demolition, and post-demolition conditions until pre-demolition PM10 levels are recorded.

What is the name of the third-party consultant responsible for the air monitoring plan?

- [Axis Response Group](#)

What are the details of the dust control plan?

- Dust control measures include the use of water trucks, Dust Bosses (APPENDIX B), and water lines attached to the units performing the work.
- Stockpiled material/debris will be monitored throughout the workday to minimize dust emissions. Periodic misting of piles will be completed as needed during the work shift. Material addition to or removal from the storage piles will be temporarily halted during windy conditions.
- When wind conditions are 20 mph or above operations will be adjusted to reduce chance of dust emissions or temporarily halted if dust cannot be controlled.
- All waste trailers will be properly tarped before departing the site.
- Fabric mesh will be affixed to the construction site fence face and maintained for the duration of the project.
- Paved and unpaved roads will be wet down as necessary based on weather conditions and visual observations.
- To avoid any dust/debris/mud from being tracked into the public road, a wheel wash will be installed at the south gate. Water will be also sprayed in the path of trucks hauling debris creating any such condition.
- Speed limit signs noting 15 mph will be posted and enforced at the site.
- If there is any track out, the demolition company will sweep the street.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & PUBLIC INFORMATION

How are we keeping communities informed throughout the process of the demolition?

- Residents will be informed when the demolition starts through various modes of communication from DOB, CDPH and OEMC.

Will residents be provided with real-time reports on air quality?

- CDPH will evaluate the best way and how often it is feasible to share air monitoring data with the public.

What is within the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)?



- Please contact USACE Chicago Regulatory Specialist Lyn Nitz-Mercaeant at Linda.C.Nitz-Mercaeant@usace.army.mil or 312-846-5512 for more information about USACE's jurisdiction and role in this demolition.

What is the CDOT traffic plan for demolition?

- Traffic flow will enter the site heading north on Damen Avenue and off of 29th Street/Marketplace Access Road and depart south to 29th Street/Marketplace Access Road, heading west to Damen Avenue.

How are we reducing waste and incorporating sustainability into this demolition?

- Under the [Construction and Demolition Site Waste Recycling Ordinance](#), contractors must:
 - Keep track of the amount of construction and demolition debris that is generated on project sites.
 - Recycle at least 50% of the recyclable debris that is generated.
 - Submit a Recycling Compliance Form to the Department of Public Health at the end of each project, along with an affidavit from the waste hauler or recycler.

How are historic materials being preserved during this demolition?

- The Memorandum of Agreement between USACE, MAT Limited Partnership, and SHPO outlines specific expectations for the salvaging of historic material.
- This is not under the purview of a City department.

Have more questions?

- DOB and CDPH will have inspectors on site daily. We encourage residents to reach out to the following contacts with questions:
 - Eugene Kuc, DOB Supervising Building Construction Inspector, 312-446-5619
 - Eamon Reilly, CDPH Environmental Engineer III, 312-745-7235
- Residents should report community concerns observed directly to 311.

APPENDIX A: Damen Silos Site Structures Undergoing Demolition



APPENDIX B: Dust Bosses



Example of Spillage Boom

