



# Newburyport Explosion

## CASE STUDY

*DISASTER MANAGEMENT & RECOVERY SERVICES*



NETINC.COM

(508) 234-4440

83 GILMORE DR.  
SUTTON, MA 01590

# OVERVIEW

The Newburyport Explosion caused extensive contamination, structural damage, media and political attention, and regulatory scrutiny. NEDT responded within hours, leading the cleanup, waste removal, and site stabilization to ensure safety and compliance.

MAY 2023  
PROJECT COST: \$6 MILLION



## BACKGROUND

In May 2023, a catastrophic explosion occurred at a pharmaceutical contract manufacturing facility in Newburyport, MA. A chemical process tank detonated, causing extensive damage to the facility and surrounding areas, spreading hazardous contaminants, and tragically resulting in the loss of a worker's life. Due to the severity of the incident, extensive media and political attention, and regulatory scrutiny, the facility faced an urgent crisis that required immediate containment, cleanup, and site restoration.

NEDT, a trusted emergency response partner for the facility, was called to the scene within hours. Over the course of this \$6 million project, NEDT executed a full-scale hazardous waste cleanup, coordinated with multiple agencies, and completed the necessary remediation and demolition work while ensuring safety and compliance.

# THE CHALLENGE

Managing the aftermath of the explosion required swift action and expert coordination. Structural instability, hazardous waste contamination, and intense regulatory oversight posed significant challenges that demanded a precise and compliant response.

## **Explosive Damage & Instability**

The explosion blew a process tank through the roof, leaving the building's structure unstable and hazardous.

## **Hazardous Waste Containment**

Environmental contaminants, debris, and chemical waste were spread throughout the area, requiring immediate mitigation.

## **Regulatory & Legal Oversight**

Extensive involvement from local, state, and federal agencies required meticulous compliance and evidence preservation.

## **Client Business Survival**

The pharmaceutical manufacturer needed an effective response to mitigate financial and operational risks.

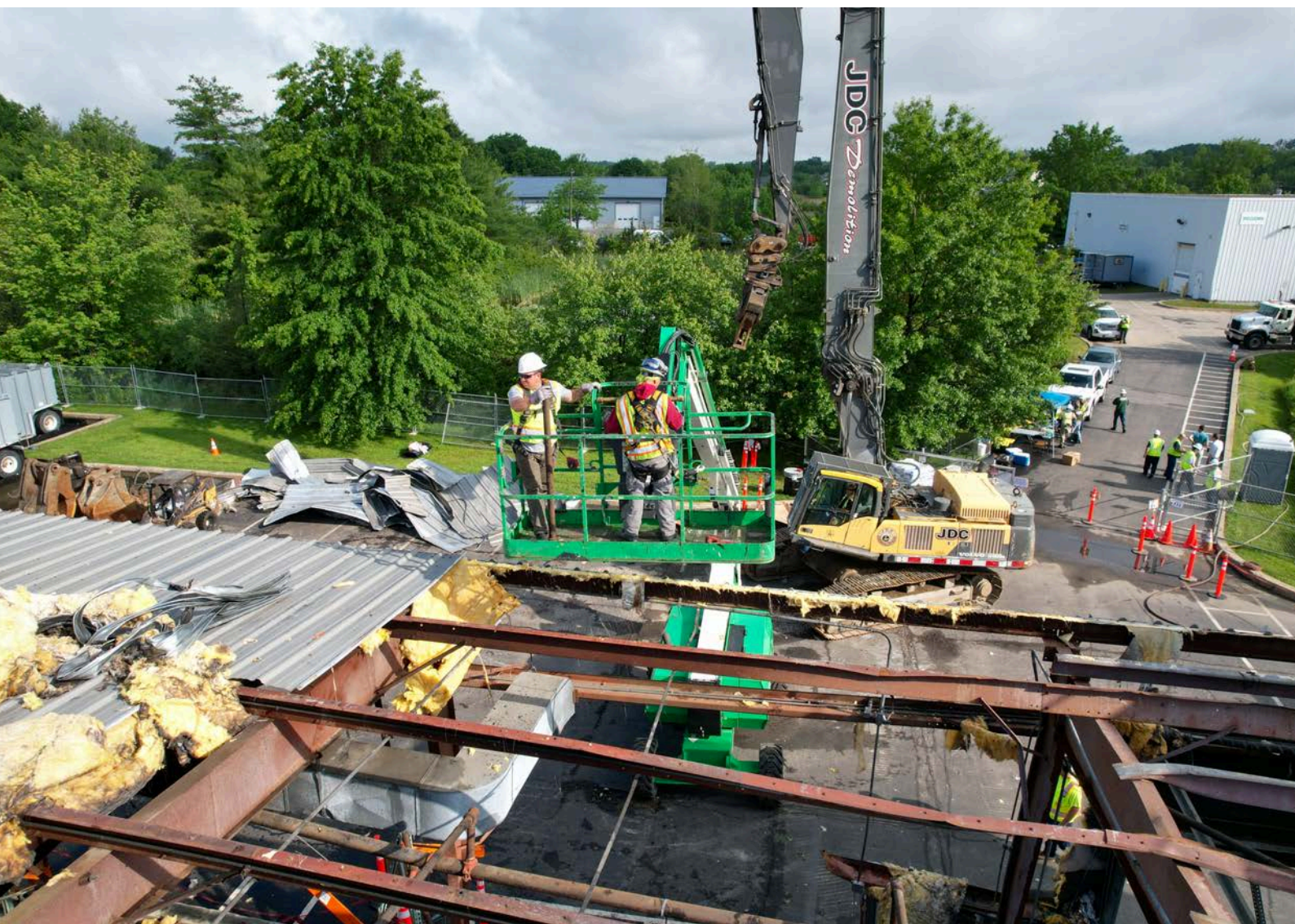
## **Intensive Media & Political Scrutiny**

Negative media exposure heightened the urgency for swift and effective remediation.



# NEDT'S RESPONSE

NEDT mobilized immediately, deploying crews and equipment to contain contamination and stabilize the site. With a structured response plan, we managed hazardous waste removal, coordinated with regulatory agencies, and ensured a safe and efficient cleanup process.



# A Timeline

## ● 2023

- Initial response and stabilizing the site
- Establishing site security
- Decontamination of adjacent properties and buildings
- Removal of blast debris from local properties and roadways
- Removal and disposal of all chemicals within the impacted building in preparation for demolition
- Cleanup of explosion zone in conjunction with the investigation of the explosion
- Selective demolition of impacted areas,
- Repair building damage caused by the explosion including masonry work and other trades
- Prep the building for sale including power washing and removal of legacy equipment and production lines and tanks



# Emergency Action Plan & Immediate Response



Removed remaining unaffected chemical drums and tank contents in the immediate and surrounding explosion blast area.



Dispatched crews and equipment within hours to begin contamination mitigation.



Deployed berms and vacuum trucks to contain hazardous spills and prevent further environmental contamination.



Secured site access with perimeter fencing and controlled access points to ensure safety and regulatory compliance.

# SITE STABILIZATION & WASTE REMOVAL

- Responded to abutting wetland and building contamination.
- Waste packaging, transportation, and disposal of bulk liquids and solids, drummed, and lab pack wastes.
- Removed over 450+ 55-gallon drums of chemical waste and laboratory materials.
- Drained centralized glycol and water piping heat transfer system.
- Conducted hazardous waste categorization and cleanup in conjunction with OSHA forensic investigations.
- Pumped and decommissioned a 2,000-gallon sodium hydroxide scrubber system.
- Removed contents from, clean and decommissioned various chemical tanks.





# SITE STABILIZATION & WASTE REMOVAL

■ Treated and managed over 200,000 gallons of PFAS-containing wastewater.

■ Conducted selective demolition of impacted structures while preserving unaffected areas.

■ Managed 21 roll-off containers of PFAS-contaminated construction and demolition waste.

■ Coordinated wetland contamination response to mitigate environmental impact.





# SAFETY & COMPLIANCE

- Prepared building for selective demolition by locking and tagging out all utilities.
- Abated mold and cleaned building in advance of occupation.
- Implemented a building wall movement and crack monitoring system to prevent collapse hazards.
- Provided high-quality drone photo documentation for investigative and project management purposes.
- Ensured full compliance with all DOT, EPA, and State regulations.
- Completed 15,000+ work hours with zero safety violations or accidents.



# COORDINATION & SUBCONTRACTOR MANAGEMENT

Successfully managing such a complex and hazardous site required collaboration with specialized subcontractors. NEDT efficiently coordinated multiple teams to ensure that each phase of the cleanup, demolition, and remediation was executed safely and in compliance with regulatory standards. By aligning subcontractors with the client's goals, NEDT streamlined the process and delivered an effective, high-quality response.

## EFFICIENTLY MANAGED THE FOLLOWING SUBCONTRACTORS TO ALIGN WITH CLIENT'S STATED GOALS:

Licensed Site Professional

Demolition Contractor

Shoring Engineer

Oversite Professional Engineer

Asbestos Inspector

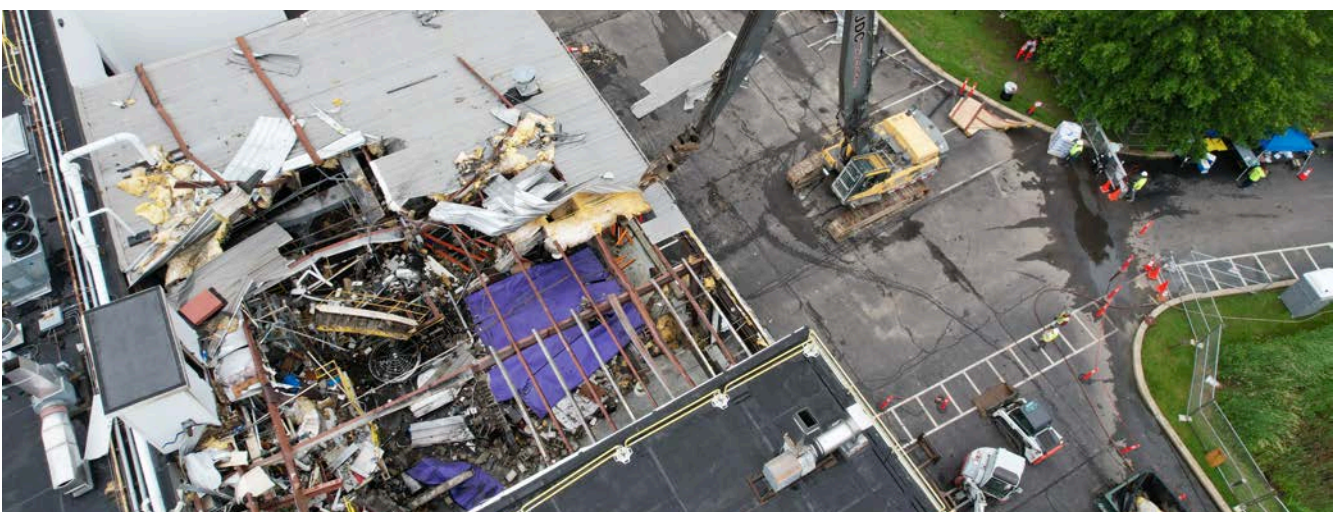
Industrial Hygienist

Wetlands Environmental Specialist

Wastewater Treatment Contractor

Tradesmen:

Electrical, roofing, masonry contractors





# RESULTS & OUTCOMES



## Efficient Containment & Cleanup

All hazardous waste removed and disposed of properly, preventing further contamination.



## Regulatory Compliance & Coordination

Successfully collaborated with local, state, and federal agencies to meet all compliance requirements.



## Structural Stabilization & Demolition

Safely prepared the site for sale and redevelopment while ensuring environmental integrity.



## Client Business Recovery

Enabled the client to transition the property while mitigating long-term liabilities.



# PROJECT IMPACT

**450+ 55-gallon drums of hazardous waste removed.**

**45 tons of debris safely disposed of.**

**48,000 lbs of hazardous materials transported and treated.**

**200,000 gallons of PFAS-contaminated wastewater treated and removed.**

**20,000 sq ft building and 12-acre site remediated and restored.**



## Best Outcomes for Client:

- Earned confidence and trust of regulatory agencies through diligent, professional work results and cooperation
- No further fines or violations for client
- Reduced media and political scrutiny
- Building cleaned for future use
- One contractor to handle complex response

# CUT SHEET

## *Pharmaceutical Contract Manufacturing, Newburyport, MA*

### **Project Overview**

- Date: May 2023
- Project Cost: \$6 million
- Scope: Responded to a fatal catastrophic explosion at a pharmaceutical contract manufacturer.

### **Key Challenges**

- Client faced an existential crisis and needed rapid response for business survival.
- Explosion caused severe structural instability, with a process tank blowing through the roof.
- Large quantities of hazardous chemicals and waste required immediate removal.
- Environmental contaminants and debris spread throughout the local area.
- Ongoing forensic investigation occurred alongside cleanup and demolition.
- Multiple Local, State, and Federal agencies involved in regulatory oversight.
- Extensive negative media and political exposure for the client.

### **NEDT's Role & Actions Taken**

- Served as prime contractor from the emergency response through selective demolition.
- Emergency Response: Secured site access, stabilized structures, and prevented contamination spread.
- Hazardous Waste Removal: Safely removed over 450+ 55-gallon drums of chemicals, 200,000 gallons of PFAS-containing wastewater, and 21 roll-off containers of contaminated debris.
- Site Remediation: Managed wetland contamination, wastewater treatment, and environmental containment.
- Structural & Safety Measures: Installed monitoring systems, prepared the building for demolition, and coordinated forensic investigation.
- Final Preparations: Lock-out/tag-out of utilities, mold abatement, and high-quality drone documentation for regulatory compliance.

### **Key Accomplishments**

- Successfully stabilized and remediated a 20,000 sq ft facility and 12-acre site.
- Ensured full compliance with all regulatory agencies.
- Completed 15,000+ work hours with zero safety violations.
- Provided strategic counsel to the client throughout the entire project.



# CONCLUSION

**The Newburyport explosion presented one of the most complex and high-risk hazardous waste cleanup challenges NEDT has faced. Through rapid response, expert coordination, and stringent safety measures, NEDT successfully managed the crisis, protected public health, and restored the site. This case study underscores NEDT's ability to navigate high-stakes emergency situations, delivering comprehensive hazardous waste solutions while ensuring regulatory compliance and environmental responsibility.**



# CONTACT US

For more information on how NEDT can assist with hazardous waste management and emergency response, contact us today.



[sales@NEDTinc.com](mailto:sales@NEDTinc.com)

83 GILMORE DRIVE  
SUTTON, MA 01590

508.234.4440