



PPM SITE
SERVICES
FIRST RESPONDERS

Market Segment
Environmental Services

Location
Philadelphia, PA

Date
January - March 2024

Client
Waste Management Supplier

Project Profile

Train Station Track Clean Up

Background & Situation

The 30th Street Train Station in Philadelphia is undergoing a multi-year, \$550M renovation. The 90-year-old historic landmark is one of the busiest transit hubs in the USA. It serves more than 3 million passengers a year. Comprehensive renovations include the interior, exterior, terminal, and the surrounding district. Much needed upgrades are modernizing the systems throughout the buildings and rail terminal including the train tracks that run underneath the station. In the process of reconstructing the eleven train tracks, the original wooden rail ties that lie under the metal tracks are being deconstructed and replaced with new cement ties. PPM Site Services provided the labor to safely remove the debris from the deconstruction.

The original wooden railroad ties have become decayed and rotten over time. This could lead to the tracks being unstable. The ties, cast in cement slabs, were removed by station crews. As the cement slabs were broken down, the resulting mixture of cement and liquid contained lime. PPM Site Services was brought in to remove the cement and debris from the final two tracks. Proper removal is a safety and environmental issue, with strict protocols and processes mandated by the client, OSHA and federal guidelines.

Scope

Prior to beginning the work, PPM Site Services met with clients to review the site, the tasks and safety protocols. PPM crews are HAZMAT trained First Responders armed with the latest resources and technology. To clear the debris on the two train tracks, two 14-person were deployed for day and night shifts over seven weeks. In addition to the laborers, PPM Site Services supplied the foreman, supervisors, vehicles, and PPE.

For complex, environmental remediation projects such as this, there are multiple certifications and protocols required by the clients. Additionally, there are federal guidelines, including 40 hour training, OSHA physical exams, drug tests and documentation required for each laborer. Before being permitted on the site, each team member completed a training course. PPM Site Services handled all the back end administration, training and paperwork.

Approximately 1300 feet along each track was cordoned off with temporary walls. Station crews were at the site with 36-inch saw blades used to cut the cement. As PPM crews worked on the tracks, trains were operating as scheduled just 14 feet away. The cement pieces were cut out, flushed and moved out for disposal. PPM crews removed the cement using an assembly line process. Five-gallon pails were filled up from the track and hauled up to the platform. The pails were poured into a hopper which was then taken to a disposal location. After the PPM crews completed the cement and debris disposal, the track was rebuilt with new railroad ties.

On site, PPM Supervisors were in constant communication with the clients and crews with daily progress reports and situation updates. All medical, drug tests, safety protocols and reporting were handled by PPM Site Services. Required safety protocols and Job Safety Analysis requirements were fulfilled without exception.



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Challenges

Construction sites of this scope are inherently dangerous and dynamic environments. Train station and construction crews were on site from multiple companies operating large vehicles and hazardous construction equipment. As the PPM crews worked day and night, train operations continued as normal on the adjacent track. Like many projects in the Northeast, the weather played a big part in the operations. Working outside on the exposed tracks underneath the Philadelphia station in January and February was challenging for the crews to maintain the pace during 11-hour shifts. Changes in scheduled work and the dynamics of working around the construction site added another layer of complexity.

The work itself was physically taxing. Large blocks of cement were being broken down and formed a liquid cement that contained lime, that could irritate and burn skin and eyes. The cement blocks contained rebar, a steel reinforcing rod, embedded in the concrete slabs. Rods protruding from the concrete had to be cut down to smaller size and moved into a hopper then into a disposal site. Hundreds of five gallon pails of cement were cleared and removed safely.

Regardless of the challenges, the seven week deadline was met.

Outcome & Results

Uniquely suited with equipment, fleets, supervisors and trained crews, PPM Site Services met the deadline of clearing the two tracks and removing the cement and residual debris. They completed a critical step in the renovation project of the historic 30th Street Philadelphia Train Station. With rapid response, a comprehensive solution was deployed to fulfill the job requirements without safety incidents, delays or OSHA reportable injuries.

Securing and supervising the crews for a successful outcome was due to PPM Site Services decades of experience. They specialize in delivering rapid and effective project staffing for a wide range of environmental, emergency and hazardous clean up and response.