

Adaptive reuse of well-located and culturally or historically important sites can yield neighborhood, environmental, economic, and community benefits, as shown by the revitalization of the former Falstaff Brewery.



The weather beacon atop Falstaff's tower provided local weather forecasts using colored and flashing lights



## Case Study: Falstaff Brewery Apartments - New Orleans, LA

*Abandoned brewery is transformed into housing*

The Falstaff Brewery operated in the Mid-City area of New Orleans since the early 1900s. The property laid idle for nearly 30 years since its closure in 1978. Although it was deteriorating, this seven-story building still bore its neon "Falstaff" sign – a neighborhood landmark.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans residents faced daunting challenges in rebuilding their city. To make the city strong once again, the Regional Planning Commission for the New Orleans metropolitan area and local developers are investing in traditionally low income areas to build affordable and environmentally-friendly housing. A former brownfield was cleaned up with EPA's help and brought back to life as affordable housing.

The Regional Planning Commission used EPA Brownfields funding to conduct an environmental site assessment on the eight-acre property in August 2005. The developer, Falstaff Associates I LLC, then purchased the property and addressed asbestos, lead-based paint, and solid waste throughout the building. The Falstaff site received clearance from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality following cleanup of the historic facility.

The developer converted the building into one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments. By preserving the structure and the iconic "Falstaff" sign, the redevelopment was able to celebrate the neighborhood's history, while making critical strides in

renewing the City of New Orleans. Nearly half of the 147 apartments are reserved for households that fall below the city's median income. Residents began moving into the building in March 2008 and it is now 95 percent occupied. The project is spurring redevelopment of the surrounding area, as construction of additional apartment complexes is underway throughout the neighborhood. This is one of the first redevelopment projects to be completed in New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina. Residents enjoy a rooftop terrace and retail courtyard, and a beer garden is in the works, paying tribute to the property's past use.

### Benefits

- Eight-acre property was assessed and had hazardous building materials removed
- Provides 147 apartments for low- and moderate-income families
- Enhanced site sustainability by using existing structures to minimize waste created by demolition
- Helping to enhance and strengthen the community fabric of New Orleans
- Retained local culture through adaptive reuse of community landmark

