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## **Deal in the works to keep Avondale Shipyard open past 2013**

April 2, 2012—Several media sources in the New Orleans area have reported that a deal is in the works to keep the nearby Avondale Shipyards open past its proposed 2013 closure date. According to a story published by Fox News 8, the deal would convert Avondale from a military to a commercial shipbuilding facility, and allow approximately 3,800 of the shipyard's 5,000 current employees to keep their jobs.

[Avondale Shipyards](#) is one of the oldest and largest shipbuilding facilities in the state of Louisiana. According to a recent history of the site:

“The Avondale Shipyards was founded in 1938 under the name Avondale Marine Way about 20 miles north of New Orleans near the town of Westwego, LA. During one period, Avondale was the largest [jobsites in the state of Louisiana](#), with about 26,000 total shipyard workers employed at the site.”

“Avondale initially built only tugs and barges, but after the outbreak of World War II, it began making small cargo ships for the U.S. Merchant Marines. After the war, the shipyard was expanded to its current location at the Harvey Repair Yard along the Harvey Canal... More than 2500 ships were built at Avondale in the 70 years since it opened.”

The Avondale Shipyard is one of a number of [shipyards](#) and other jobsites in the state of Louisiana where parts and other materials containing asbestos were used for decades. Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral that was frequently used for insulation and in heat-resistant products until the public became aware that it could cause cancer.

According to recent [lawsuits](#), Avondale shipyard workers may be at risk of contracting with mesothelioma or other asbestos-related diseases as a result of the asbestos-containing materials used at the site. Because of the long latency period of asbestos diseases, workers who were employed at the Avondale Shipyard or Harvey Repair Yard decades ago may only now be developing symptoms of mesothelioma or other asbestos cancers.