

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

1. Name of Property

historic name Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District

other names/site number General Wesco Stove Company

2. Location

street & number Area bounded by North Jefferson Avenue, East Phelps Street and North Robberson Avenue and East Tampa Street [n/a] not for publication

city or town Springfield [n/a] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Greene code 077 zip code 65806

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO

Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date

[] entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].

[] determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet [].

[] determined not eligible for the
National Register.

[] removed from the
National Register

[] other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
Greene County, Missouri

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<u> </u> objects
		<u>6</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing.
n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION:
Manufacturing Facility

Current Function
VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
OTHER: Factory

Materials
foundation limestone
concrete
walls brick
concrete
roof asphalt
metal
other metal
glass

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
INDUSTRY

Periods of Significance
1904 – 1953

Significant Dates
1904
1944

Significant Person(s)
n/a

Cultural Affiliation
n/a

Architect/Builder
Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository: City of Springfield

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.16 acres

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	474225	4118580			
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Lee Burton, President and Chief Preservation Officer

organization Historic Springfield, Inc date August 18, 2003

street & number P.O. Box 50305 telephone 417-894-8323

city or town Springfield state MO zip code 65805-0305

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name See continuation sheet

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
Greene County, Missouri**

Summary:

The Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District, located on a 3.16-acre industrial site bounded by North Jefferson Avenue, East Phelps Street, North Robberson Avenue, and East Tampa Street in Springfield, Greene County, Missouri, consists of the remaining six factory and warehouse buildings of a large cast iron stove manufacturing complex. Construction on the site began in 1904, with rapid expansion continuing through 1914. Although the complex continued to develop and expand on the site over the next 50 years, the six extant buildings date to this early period. All six buildings are in a simple industrial, factory style, with minimal architectural embellishment. They variously have flat, low-pitch and gabled roofs. The six buildings were constructed as individual structures. However, they currently present the general appearance of a single massive unit since several were connected to each other as they were built over different phases of development. The elevations of the buildings have an abundance of symmetrically-placed arched and rectangular windows and numerous door openings. While many of these openings have been in-filled or boarded, they are still clearly evident and continue to represent the buildings' "open light" design. Several generations of steel factory-type windows are present and, while in different stages of deterioration, provide a rich history of how the buildings evolved as the company continued to develop. The Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District is situated within a once vital, but now blighted industrial basin northeast of Springfield's Public Square. However, current redevelopment activities through public and private investments in the city's Jordan Valley Park effort are bringing new life to the area. All six of the buildings within the district contribute to its historic character. Although currently vacant and in deteriorated condition, they retain substantial integrity of design, material, location and association as one of Springfield's most important industrial operations.

Elaboration:

The Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District is located five blocks northeast of Springfield's Public Square along the southern rim of the Jordan Creek Valley industrial basin. The property is in a once vital, but now blighted area containing scattered historic commercial and industrial buildings separated by modern developments. The MFA Milling Co., a large grain storage operation now vacant, is located directly west of the district; and, the Springfield Warehouse and Industrial Historic District (*NR listed 6/25/99*) and the D.M. Oberman Manufacturing Co. Building (*NR 4/10/02*) are one block west along Boonville Avenue. The property south of the subject property across East Phelps Street originally housed the Springfield Tablet Manufacturing Company, but has been severely altered. The Woods-Evertz district occupies its original 3.16-acre site bounded by North Jefferson Avenue on the east, East Phelps Street on the south, North Robberson Avenue on the west and East Tampa Street (originally Pine Street) on the north (*See Photos 1-3*). The east boundary at North Jefferson Street served as the front of the Woods-Evertz complex, with 521 North Jefferson serving as its original business address. The south branch line of the "Frisco" Railway and Kansas, Fort Scott and Memphis Railroad constructed in the 1890s runs along the south boundary of the district at East Phelps Street. The subject property consists of the six remaining factory and warehouse buildings of the Woods-Evertz Stove Company, which developed the site for its new cast iron stove manufacturing operations beginning in 1904 (*See Photos 4-12*). Several smaller buildings at the southeast and southwest corners of the property have been demolished over the last thirty years and these areas currently serve as surface parking for surrounding businesses. But, the six extant buildings, constructed between 1904 and 1914, retain substantial integrity and continue to reflect the scale and complexity of the Woods-Evertz manufacturing operations. All but one of them (Building 1 at the center of the site) are placed at a zero-setback to the perimeter of the property.

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The Woods-Evertz Stove Company was constructed on a largely underdeveloped tract, which previously contained few small residential and commercial buildings (*See Figure 1*). The original industrial complex completed in 1904 is believed to have consisted of five buildings: 1) a one-story office building on North Jefferson Avenue; 2) a one-story brick factory at the rear of the office; 3) a small lumber house north of the factory at the center of the site; 4) an oil house north of the lumber house; and 5) a two-story warehouse along the north boundary of the complex. By 1906, a second warehouse, a two-story brick building facing the rail line at the south, was constructed across the front south elevation of the earlier factory building (*See Figure 2*). Company signage painted at the top of the inside north perimeter wall of this second warehouse building indicates that this was the primary south elevation of the earlier one-story building at the rear. Reflective of its growth and rapid expansion, the Woods-Evertz operations included 18 buildings and out structures by 1910 (*See Figure 3*). Five of the extant buildings within the subject property date to this initial period of construction and expansion. The sixth extant building, a one-story rectangular brick building at the northeast corner of the property, was constructed c. 1914 across the north end of the primary east elevation of the original warehouse building along the northern boundary. An artist's drawing of the complex published c. 1919 shows the dense development of the site during its first 15 years, although representations of specific buildings are inaccurate (*See Figure 4*).

In the 1920s, the Woods-Evertz Stove Company constructed a new, higher-style two-story office building along North Jefferson Avenue, reflecting its growth and prosperity. This Spanish Mission Revival-influenced building was constructed of wood frame and stucco veneer and had a red clay tile pent roof across the façade.¹ By 1933, the Woods-Evertz complex was fully developed, although modifications to existing buildings and some removal of smaller out structures continued to occur in response to changes of operations and space needs (*See Figure 5*). In 1944, the Woods-Evertz Stove Company was acquired by General Steel Products of Joplin, Missouri, and renamed General Wesco Stove Company. Operations continued within the existing industrial complex, with little changes to the site (*See Figure 6*).

Individual Building Descriptions:

The following provides descriptions of the individual buildings within the Wood-Evertz Stove Company Historic District. Reference numbers correspond to the accompanying district map.

1. Building 1: c. 1904. A one-story brick industrial building with a slightly south-to-north pitched flat roof and limestone foundation. The building originally served as the factory, but was later converted to a warehouse as the stove manufacturing operations expanded. The primary south elevation of the building is fully covered by the two-story brick building constructed c. 1906 (*See Building 2*). The side east elevation, the most visible from the front east boundary of the district, has a stepped parapet with tile coping that follows the roof pitch. It originally had six tall, narrow rectangular windows with arched lintels and cast iron sills. These openings have been in-filled with concrete block, but are still clearly evident. Later side doors cut into the east elevation have also been in-filled. The east elevation has been painted white. A concrete dock spans the northern two-thirds of this side.
Contributing
2. Building 2: c. 1906. A two-story rectangular red brick industrial building with a slightly south-to-north pitched flat roof, limestone foundation and full basement. The building is situated at a zero-setback from the southern

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**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
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boundary of the district along the rail line on East Phelps Street. A painted sign for "The Woods-Evertz Stove Company" is still evident across the flat parapet at the roof line of the primary elevation. A steel frame and galvanized sheet metal shed roof covers the south elevation and is a later alteration. The second story of the north elevation has 13 symmetrically-placed single arched windows. The extant windows have operable metal sashes, but are not original to the building. These window openings have been shortened as evidenced by masonry repairs below them. A narrow corbelled brick band separates the upper and lower stories. The first story has 13 original symmetrically-placed arched openings. Two wide freight door openings are located at the third and tenth bays. The remaining bays are windows. Several of the windows have been shortened over time, but the original height and cast iron sills are still evident in the windows at the center of the elevation. Four arched basement windows are located along the foundation line. All the first-story and basement openings have been in-filled with concrete block. The date of construction and architectural evidence indicate that the building's original windows had double-hung wood sashes and frames. However, examples of later period steel factory-type windows are found along the second story of the side east and west elevations. *Contributing*

3. Building 3: c. 1910. A two-story rectangular industrial building constructed of smooth-faced concrete block, which housed the pattern operations for the company. It has a flat roof and concrete foundation. The primary south elevation has 19 symmetrically-placed square windows with concrete lintels on each of the second and first stories, with later period metal factory-type windows still intact. The height of the second-story windows has been shortened, but their original height is still evident by the lower concrete sills. Single bands of pitched-face concrete block are found at the roofline, between the two stories and below the first story. Pitched-face block quoins are also used at the corners of the building to provide an interesting contrast to the otherwise smooth wall surfaces. A single door entrance below the twelfth window bay has a stylized fluted metal surround. Eleven star-shaped cast iron tie rod plates are located across the top of the primary north elevation. The side east elevation of the building is situated at a zero-setback from the eastern boundary of the district at North Jefferson Avenue. It has three symmetrically-placed window bays at each of the second and first stories. The first-story windows retain their original height. Six star-shaped cast iron tie rod plates are located across the top of this elevation. *Contributing*
4. Building 4: c. 1914. A one-story rectangular brick industrial building with a flat roof, located at a zero-setback at the northeast corner of the district boundaries at North Jefferson Avenue and East Tampa Street. The building served as the assembly area for the manufactured cast iron products. The primary east elevation has a stepped parapet. The central two of the four symmetrically-placed windows at the east elevation are still open. The side north elevation has five window openings with projecting bull header bonded brick sills. These have been in-filled; but, the original fenestration is still evident. The building has been painted white. *Contributing*
5. Building 5: c. 1904-1910. A two-story rectangular concrete block and brick industrial building. It served as the primary factory after its relocation from the earlier building (*See Building 1*). It consists of a two-story central section with a stepped parapet at the primary east elevation, flanked on either side by a one-story wing. The east elevation is constructed of smooth-faced concrete block with pitched-face block detailing similar to that found in Building 3. The second story of the central section has four rectangular window openings. The south side has a modern metal canopy roof covering a concrete loading dock. The north side is covered by the one-story building (Building 4) to the east. The side north elevation is constructed of brick and is situated at a zero-setback from the

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northern boundary of the district at East Tampa Street. Windows along this elevation have also been in-filled; however, their original cast iron sills are still evident. This building originally served as a warehouse, but was later converted to house a foundry. *Contributing*

6. **Building 6:** 1904-1910. A one-story rectangular concrete block industrial building, which housed the company's foundry operations. Its primary elevation faces south. The west section of the building has a taller central section with a stepped parapet, flanked on either side by shorter one-story wings. The central section has a low-pitched gable roof and its upper sides are covered with corrugated sheet metal. This side of the south elevation has eight original window openings, which have been boarded. A one-story brick projecting wing is found extending south from the building. Interestingly, this has a flat parapet evident along the roofline of its northern perimeter wall. This suggests that it may have been a small, earlier free-standing brick building connected by in-fill to the larger concrete block building to the north. However, there is not sufficient documentation to distinguish it as a separate resource within the district. The rear north elevation of the building is situated at a zero-setback from the northern boundary of the district along East Phelps Street. It is constructed with smooth-faced concrete block with pitch-faced block detailing. The stepped parapet of the shorter wings rise toward the taller central section. The parapet has tile coping. The rear north elevation has twelve symmetrically-placed rectangular windows, which extend downward to ground level. These have been in-filled with concrete block. However, the in-fill has been slightly recessed leaving a clear impression of the original window openings. The building has been painted white. *Contributing*

Integrity Statement:

Overall, the Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District retains substantial integrity of design, material, location and association as one of Springfield's most important industrial concerns in the first half of the 20th century. The numerous smaller out structures and some of the larger earlier buildings have been demolished. However, the remaining six buildings in scale and evident original construction continue to reflect the size and complexity of the manufacturing operations conducted on the site beginning in 1904 and continuing through the late 1960s. Although the buildings are currently vacant and in poor condition, they each contribute to the historic character of this large and important industrial complex.

End Notes:

1. This building was demolished in 1988 for surface parking subsequent to the 1984 Survey of Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri, which identified the property as eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places (Inventory No. N-139). **Reference:** City of Springfield Demolition Records. City of Springfield Department of Building and Development Services. 1988, North Jefferson Avenue, Record 18, Permit B88-3264.

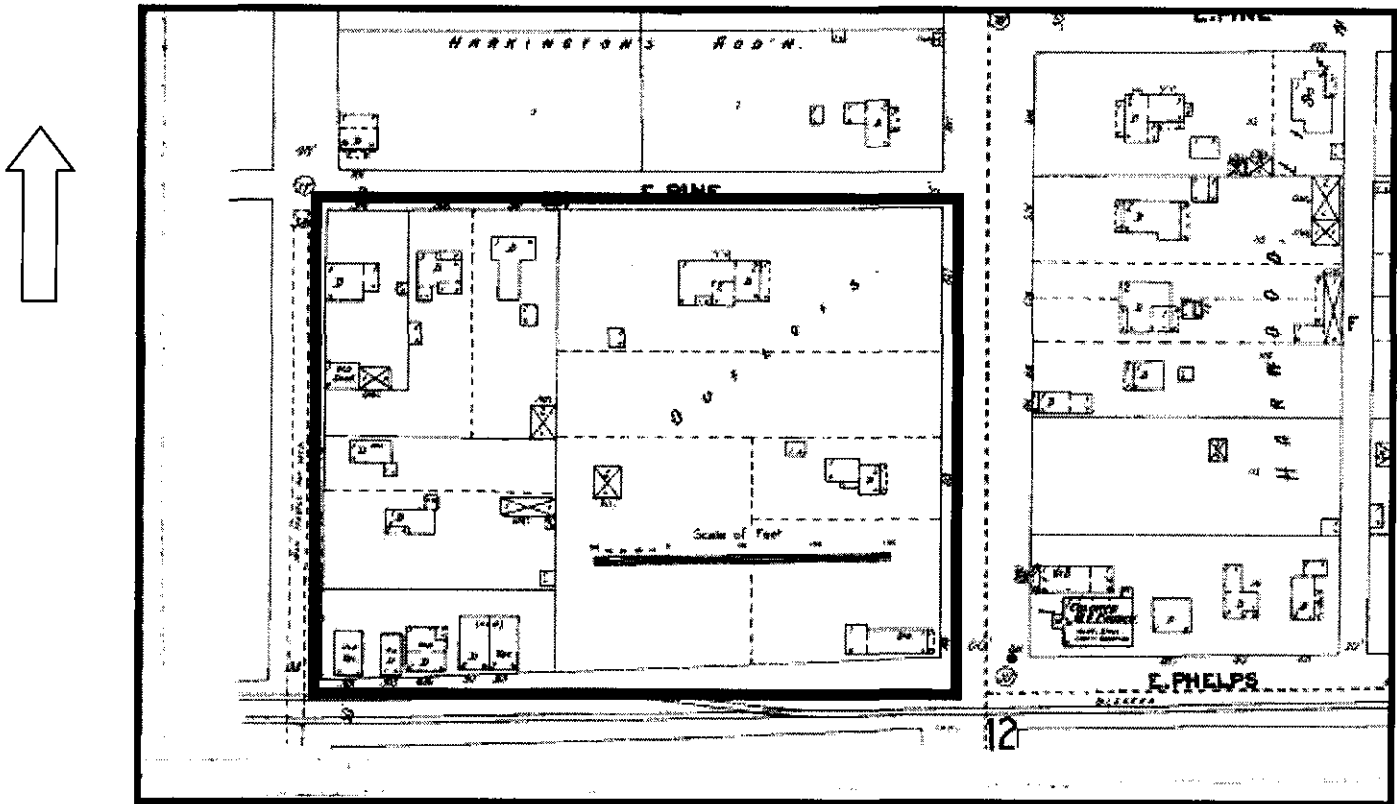
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Figure 1: Site Map. Lot bounded by North Jefferson Avenue, East Phelps Street, North Robberson Avenue and East Pine Street (now East Tampa Street). Future site of Woods Evertz-Stove Company. Not to scale (Map: Sanborn Fire Insurance Co., 1902)



 = Marks site of subject property

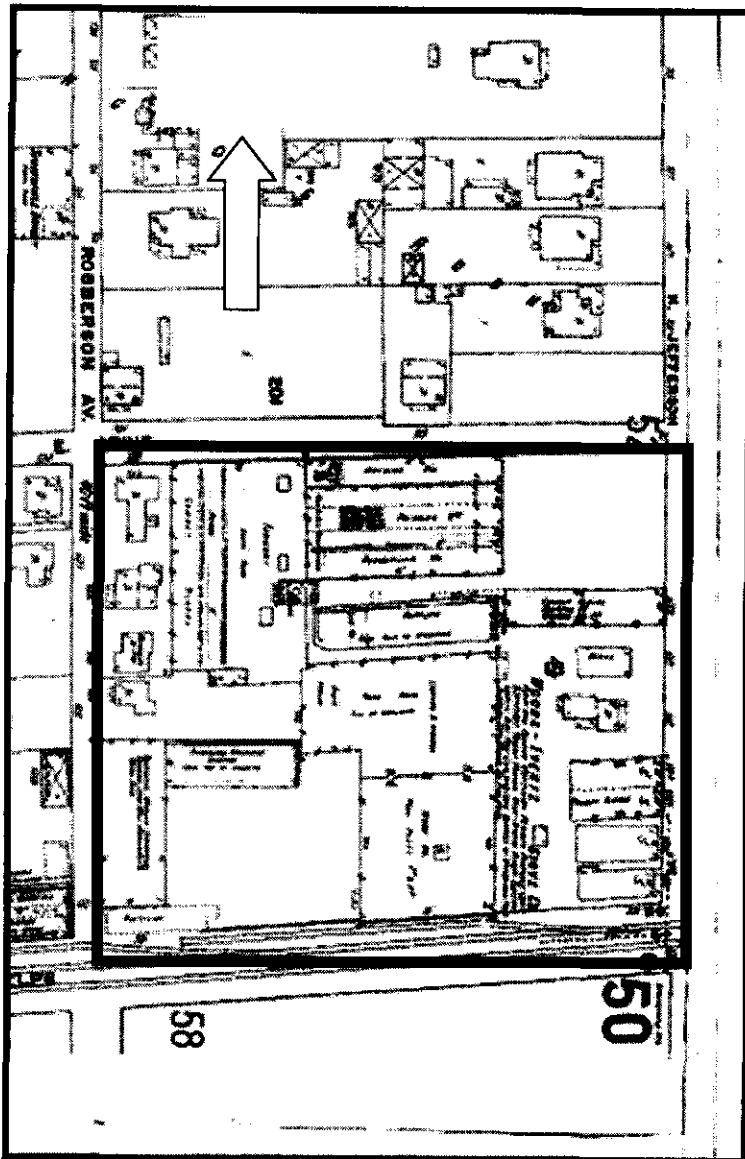
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Figure 3: Site Map. Lot bounded by North Jefferson Avenue, East Phelps Street, North Robberson Avenue and East Pine Street (now East Tampa Street). Site of Woods Evertz-Stove Company. Map shows expansion of industrial complex between 1906 and 1910. Not to scale (Map: Sanborn Fire Insurance Co., 1910)



 = Marks site of subject property

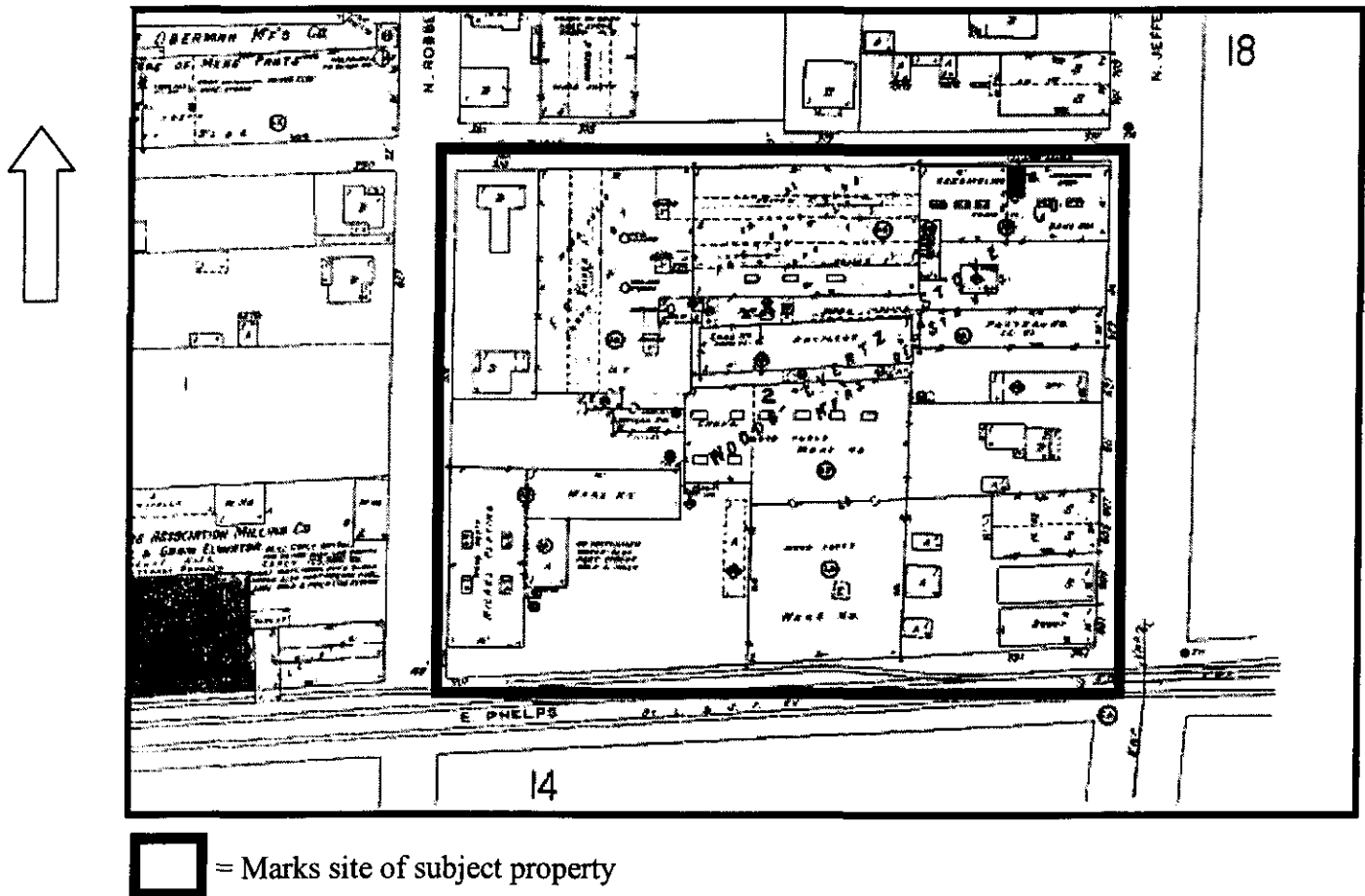
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Figure 5: Site Map. Lot bounded by North Jefferson Avenue, East Phelps Street, North Robberson Avenue and East Pine Street (now East Tampa Street). Site of Woods Evertz-Stove Company. Not to scale (Map: Sanborn Fire Insurance Co., 1933)



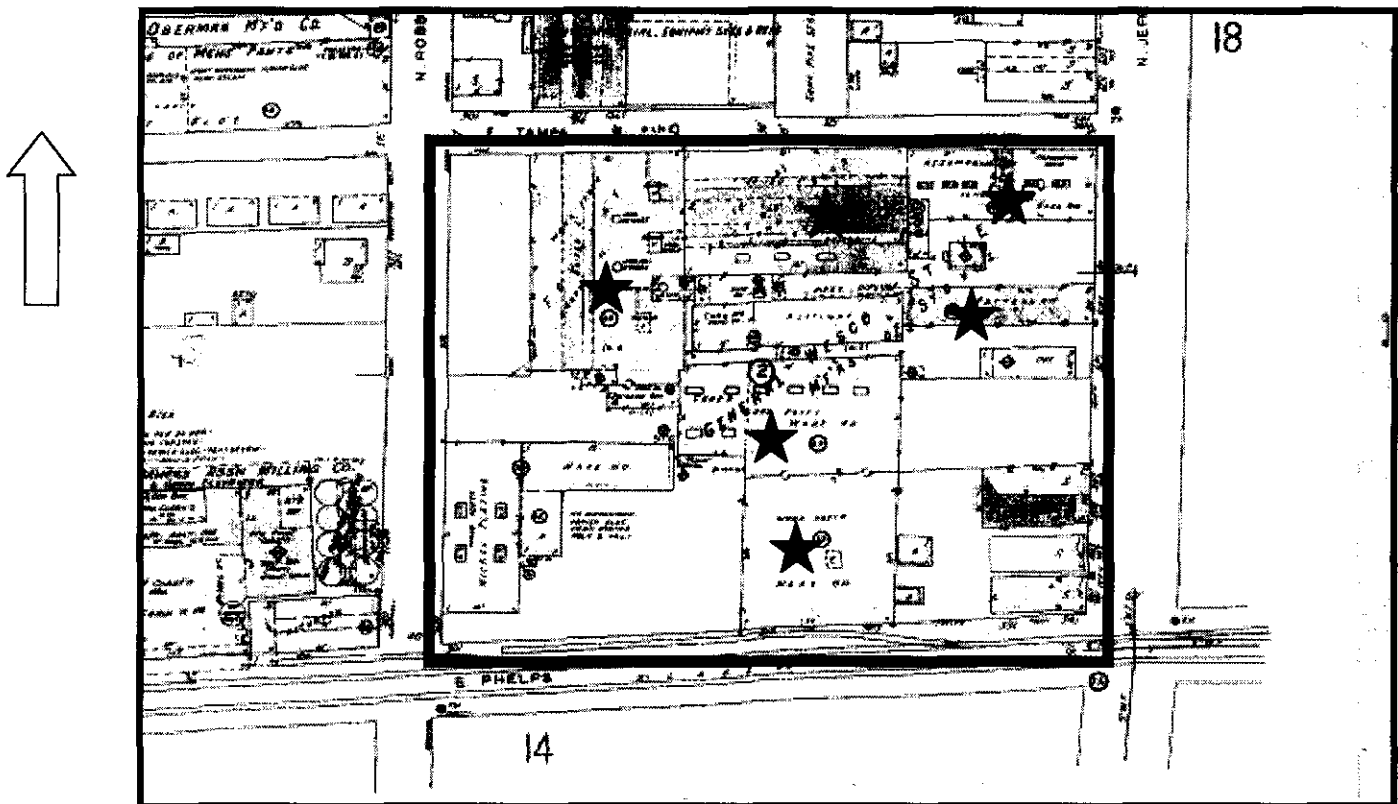
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Figure 7: Site Map. Lot bounded by North Jefferson Avenue, East Phelps Street, North Robberson Avenue and East Pine Street (now East Tampa Street). Site of General Wesco Stove Company, formerly Woods-Evertz Stove Company. Not to scale. Extant buildings within Woods-Evertz district are marked (Map: Sanborn Fire Insurance Co., 1950)



-  = Marks site of subject property
-  = Buildings still extant

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**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
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Summary:

The Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District in Springfield, Greene County, Missouri, is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of INDUSTRY. It is located on its original 3.16-acre site bounded by North Jefferson Avenue, East Phelps Street, North Robberson Avenue and East Tampa Street along the rail line crossing the Jordan Creek Valley industrial basin. The Woods-Evertz Stove Company, founded in 1898 as the Lovan Stove and Tinware Manufacturing Company, moved from its original location at 212 West Phelps Street to the subject property in 1904 in its transition from a jobbing business to a manufacturer and distributor of cast iron stoves and heaters. The district consists of the six remaining large-scale brick and concrete single- and multi-story factory and warehouse buildings constructed on the site between 1904 and 1914. In the area of INDUSTRY, it is significant for its role in the development of Springfield's industrial economy. As manufacturer of the "Wesco" brand of cast iron stoves, the Woods-Evertz Company distributed its products nationally and was one of Springfield's most important industrial concerns. In 1944, Woods-Evertz (at that time one of the oldest stove manufacturers in the west) was acquired by General Steel Products of Joplin, Missouri, and renamed General Wesco Stove Company. Operations continued at the site through the late 1960s. The Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District is representative of a utilitarian early 20th century industrial complex and is the largest, most intact example in Springfield. The period of significance is determined as 1904-1953, beginning at the time of the first construction and operations on the site and ending at the minimum age criterion.

Background:

The development of Springfield as the regional agricultural, commercial and industrial hub of southwestern Missouri during the 19th and early 20th centuries was rooted in its surrounding abundance of natural resources: fertile soil, clean spring water, and large mineral deposits. Early economic growth was stimulated by the processing of agricultural crops and the light manufacture of agricultural-related and household products for local markets. However, the arrival of the railroad in 1870 allowed the easy transport of raw materials to support heavy industry and the distribution of a wide range of manufactured goods for regional and national markets.¹

In 1898, Ernest Lovan left his position as a bookkeeper for the Springfield Stove Company at 618 East Commercial Street to join Henry Schneider and Charles Evertz to form the Lovan Stove and Tinware Manufacturing Company. Mr. Schneider, a native of Indiana, moved to Springfield in 1889 and invested in the start-up of the Tune-Schneider Clothing Co., located at 152 Public Square. Charles Evertz was a traveling salesman. This new venture originally operated as a wholesale distributor of manufactured goods in a two-story brick commercial building at 214-216 (later 212) West Phelps Street.² Mr. Schneider served as president, Mr. Evertz as vice-president and Mr. Lovan as secretary and manager.³

By 1901, Mr. Lovan had divested his interests in the Lovan Stove and Manufacturing Co, although the business continued to operate for at least a year under this name. In 1902, the company continued to operate out of its West Phelps Street location, but was renamed the Schneider-Evertz Stove Company. John B. Montgomery, an associate of Mr. Schneider and president of the Tune-Schneider Clothing Co., assumed the position of vice president. Mr. Evertz took over the day-to-day operations and financial management of Schneider-Evertz as its secretary and treasurer.⁴ In 1903, William H. Woods, another traveling salesman, joined Schneider-Evertz as a principal and took over the secretary and treasurer positions. Mr. Evertz resumed his former role as vice-president. In that year, the company was

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renamed the Woods- Evertz Stove Company, reflecting the financial interest and leadership role Mr. Woods had assumed in it.⁵ Mr. Woods shortly rose to the position of president and continued to lead the company until it was later sold in 1944.

Woods-Evertz Stove Company:

Unsatisfied with only operating as a distributor, and recognizing the opportunity in heavy industry and the growing household market, Woods-Evertz Stove Company completed construction in 1904 of an office, factory and warehouse complex for the manufacture and distribution of its own line of cast iron stoves.⁶ The site of its new operation was a 3.16-acre lot further east along the rail line from their original location. Fronting North Jefferson Avenue at the east, the site was an underdeveloped tract in a burgeoning industrial area with adequate room for expansion. The new Woods-Evertz Stove Company complex originally consisted of five buildings, but it continued to expand as sales of its manufactured cast iron stoves continued to climb and it introduced new cast iron household products.⁷ Its new brand was called "Wesco", an acronym for the company name: Woods-Evertz Stove Company. In 1906, the company expanded its distribution capabilities with a new warehouse along the rail line on East Phelps Street. Officers of the company at that time were Mr. Woods, president, Mr. H.B. McDaniels (a prominent Springfield banker), vice president, and Mr. Evertz, secretary.⁸

By 1909, annual sales of Wesco stoves grew to 50,000. In order to ensure efficient operations and meet its increasing demands, the company shutdown for 30 days at the beginning of that year to complete \$8,000 in capital improvements, increasing factory capacity by over 50%. The Wesco line by this time consisted of three complete cast ranges, three complete cast cook stoves, two lines of steel ranges, two lines of steel cooks and a full line of a variety of heaters. The company had capital stock of \$130,000 and employed over 130 men. Three salesmen were added, bringing the total to five. It was one of the only Springfield industries to ship its products by rail to the Pacific Coast.⁹ By 1910, Woods-Evertz complex had expanded to include 18 major buildings and out structures.¹⁰ As a leader in Springfield, Woods-Evertz Stove Company was one of the founding members of the Springfield Jobbers and Manufacturers Association.¹¹

The demand for the Wesco line of stoves and heaters continued to rise during the second decade of the 20th century, driving the company's success and importance to Springfield's industrial base. In July 1914, the Springfield Club (the antecedent of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce) conducted an auto tour of the city's two major manufacturing concerns: the Woods-Evertz Stove Company and the Springfield Wagon Company. Under the leadership of the club's "See Springfield First" committee, chaired by Thomas E. Williams, the tour hosted a total of 145 Springfield business and elected leaders in over 50 automobiles to showcase the factory operations of the two companies. During their visit to the Woods-Evertz complex, tour participants watched workers manufacture a cast iron stove "from the moulding of the legs to the nickel plating of the top rails." The stove was being made to fill an order from the Children's Home. At the end of the tour, Woods-Evertz officials announced that they were donating the stove to the Children's Home, a gift valued at \$50.00.¹² By the end of the decade, Woods-Evertz boasted a daily output of 250 manufactured stoves. Capital stock of the company was reported as \$200,000 in 1920, representing over a +45% increase over the previous ten years. Principal stockholders at that time were William H. Woods, Charles Evertz, J.C. Graves and Henry Schneider.¹³

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In 1922, Mr. Woods stepped down briefly as Woods-Evertz president and the office was assumed by J.C. Graves.¹⁴ However, Mr. Woods retained his stockholder interests and active engagement in the company and soon resumed his position as president of the company. Little documentation exists on the activities of Woods-Evertz during its third decade, but it can be reasonably assumed that it continued to prosper along with the national economy of this period. The beginning of the company's fourth decade was marked by a significant change in ownership when in 1931 Charles Evertz, one of the original founders, divested his stockholder interests in the company. With all the early principals, Woods, Evertz and Schneider, approaching their advanced years, it was inevitable that new ownership of the thriving company was approaching.¹⁵

In March 1944, the Woods-Evertz company was acquired by L.R. Reynolds, president of the General Steel Products Company in Joplin, Missouri. Under his reorganization of the company, Mr. Reynolds renamed it the General Wesco Stove Company, recognizing strong consumer awareness of the Wesco brand. Few other changes were immediately made to the successful operations; and, all of the factory and office personnel (many having served Woods-Evertz for over 30 years) were retained. Harry Holden, an 11-year Woods-Evertz employee, was positioned as supervisor of plant operations under Robert Reynolds, son of L.R. Reynolds. In addition to continuing manufacture of its existing line of wood, coal, gas and oil stoves, the new General Wesco Stove Company announced plans to introduce a new magazine type heater. During this time, Wesco stoves and heaters enjoyed national distribution, although a predominance of its sales were in Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. The company was recognized as "one of Springfield's most important industries, doing much to direct attention to the city."¹⁶

The General Wesco Stove Company continued its operations through the 1940s; however, by the end of the decade there were indications that it had reached its zenith. One factor leading to a decline in company sales was the durability of the high-quality Wesco products. With few changes in its line and few product failures, there was no demand for household replacements. Perhaps a great indicator of its business decline was the company's possible lack of responsiveness to new technologies and shifts in consumer needs. In a 1949 interview, Harry Holden stated:

"When times are good, our sales drop off. Let things tighten up and they really pick up. It's logical, too. Why should a farmer have to buy gas or oil when he just has to go out behind his house and gather up all the wood he needs to keep warm all winter."¹⁷

General Wesco discontinued its line of gas ranges in the mid-1940s, focusing manufacturing on its core line of wood and coal products. At its peak, the company listed 195 different types of stove in its sales catalog; but, by 1949, it had trimmed its product line to 14. In explaining the shift away from gas-fueled stoves, L.R. Reynolds stated, "There's just no profit in gas models. . . . There will always be demand for coal and wood stoves."¹⁸ The booming post-World War II economy proved Mr. Holden to be correct in his understanding of the future of his company sales. The emergence of new technologies and the growing market for gas-fueled stoves and heaters proved Mr. Reynolds to be wrong.

The General Wesco Stove Company saw a rapid decline in its business in the 1950s and early 1960s, soon halting its operations altogether. In 1967, Mr. Reynolds sold the manufacturing complex to the MFA Milling Co. located directly west across North Robberson for an expansion of its storage and distribution operations.¹⁹ During this time, many of

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**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
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the smaller-scale buildings on the site were demolished. With the shut-down of its facility in 1982, MFA leased the property and subsequently sold it in 2000 to Hudson Foods (later Willowbrook Foods) for use as storage and parking in support of its poultry processing plant to the south.²⁰ The c. 1926 Spanish Mission Revival style-influenced office building facing North Jefferson Avenue was demolished in 1988 to accommodate surface parking for the Hudson Foods facility.

In May 2003, the two warehouse buildings facing East Phelps Street at the southern boundary of the district (Buildings 1 and 2) were acquired by Stove Works Lofts, LLC for development of a residential loft complex. The remaining building on the property have been identified by the City of Springfield and other interests for possible rehabilitation and development in conjunction with the Phase II expansion of the Jordan Valley Park project, which passes along its northern boundary on East Tampa Street. These new opportunities promise a new life for and sustainability of historic resources that once housed one of Springfield's most significant manufacturing operations.

Criterion A: INDUSTRY

The Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District is significant because of its important role in the industrial history of Springfield and its growing economy in the first half of the 20th century. As one of Springfield's largest manufacturing complexes, Woods-Evertz was a major employer in the city and, through its expansive line of nationally-distributed Wesco stove and heater products, contributed greatly to its prominence as a regional commercial and industrial hub. The six contributing buildings within the district property retain substantial integrity of materials, design, location and association. Under Criterion A in the area of INDUSTRY, the Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District meets the registration requirements for local significance as Springfield's largest and most intact remaining historic industrial complex.

Chronology:

The following provides an early chronology of the history of the Woods-Evertz Stove Company and its industrial complex constructed at the site of the subject property in 1904 through the end of its period of significance.

- 1898* Henry Schneider, Charles Evertz and Ernest Lovan found the Lovan Stove and Tinware Company with offices at 214-216 West Phelps Street. Lovan was previously a bookkeeper with the Springfield Stove Company located at 618 East Commercial Street.
- 1901* Ernest Lovan divests interest in Lovan Stove and Tinware Company. Business continues to operate under this name for one year.
- 1902* Lovan Stove and Tinware Company renamed Schneider-Evertz Stove Company by principals Henry Schneider, president, and Charles Evertz, secretary/treasurer.
- 1903* William H. Woods, a former traveling salesman, joins Schneider-Evertz Stove Company as principal and secretary/treasurer. Company renamed Woods-Evertz Stove Company and operates at 212 West Phelps Company.

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**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
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- 1904 Construction completed on new industrial complex at site of subject property.
- 1909 Woods-Evertz Stove Company shuts down for thirty days for \$8,000 in capital improvements. Annual capacity now at 50,000 stoves annually.
- 1910 1914"See Springfield First" committee of the Springfield Club, antecedent of the Chamber of Commerce, con
- 1922 William H. Woods temporarily steps down as officer of Woods-Evertz Stove Company, but retains principal stockholder interests.
- 1931 Charles Evertz sells interest in Woods-Evertz Stove Company.
- 1943 Charles Evertz, age 84, dies at his home at 702 South Florence in Springfield.
- 1944 Woods-Evertz Stove Company sold to General Steel Products of Joplin, Missouri. L.R. Reynolds, president of General Steel Products, renames the Springfield operations General Wesco Stove Company.
- 1946 William H. Woods, age 88, dies in LaJolla, California.
- 1951 Henry Schneider, age 88, dies in fatal car accident.
- 1952 General Wesco Stove Company operating as a major Springfield employer.
- 1967 MFA Milling Co. acquires General Wesco Stove Company site. Buildings used to support storage and distribution operations. Several smaller-scale structures demolished.
- 1988 Spanish Mission Revival style-influenced office building demolished to accommodate surface parking.
- 2000 Willowbrook Foods acquires site from MFA Milling Co.

End Notes:

1. R.I. Holcombe, ed. **A History of Greene County, Missouri.** (St. Louis: Western Historical Company, 1883), npa.
2. This building is still intact and a contributing building of the Springfield Warehouse and Industrial Historic District (*NR listed 6/25/99*).
3. **Hoye's Street and Avenue Directory of Springfield, MO.** (Kansas City, MO: Hoye's Directory Co., 1894, 1896 and 1899).
4. **Hoye's.** 1901, p. 213.
5. **Hoye's.** 1902, p. 123.
6. **Hoye's.** 1904, p. 701; 1905, p. 638.
7. **Merchants and Manufacturers Record of Springfield, Missouri.** (Springfield, MO: A. Owens Jennings, Publisher. 1906.), npa.
8. Ibid.
9. "Stove Works Start Up Full Blast." **The Republican.** (Springfield, MO. January 19, 1909), p. 2. Also, "The Woods-Evertz

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**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
1. Greene County,
Missouri**

Company Reopens." The Republican. (Springfield, MO. January 20, 1909), p. 6.

10. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. "Springfield, Missouri." (New York: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. 1910).
11. Jonathan Fairbanks and Clyde Edwin Tuck. Past and Present of Greene County, Missouri. (Indianapolis: A.W. Bowen, 1915), p. 673.
12. "Big Industrial Plants Visited on Second Tour." Springfield Leader. (Springfield, MO. July 28, 1914), p. 1
13. Don Meikr. "Wesco Still Making, Selling Reliable Coal, Wood Stoves." News-Leader. (Springfield, MO. December 18, 1949), p. 3D.
14. Dunham's Springfield City Directory. (Springfield, MO: Dunham Directory Co., Publishers. 1922), p. 532.
15. Charles Evertz died of a stroke at the age of 84 on August 10, 1943, at his home at 702 South Florence Avenue. William W. Woods, aged 88, died in La Jolla, California on May 11, 1946. Henry L. Schneider was died on June 13, 1951, from injuries suffered in a car accident the previous week. Reference: Obituary. "William H. Woods." Daily News. (Springfield, MO. March 13, 1946), npa. Also, Obituary. "Deaths: Charles Evertz." Daily News. (Springfield, MO. August 10, 1943), npa. Also, "Henry Schneider City's Seventh Fatality: Injuries Inflicted by Car Fatal to Clothing Merchant." (Springfield Leader-Press. Springfield, MO. June 14, 1951), npa.
16. "Expansion Program Planned: Stove Company Sold to New Corporation." Daily News. (Springfield, MO. March 2, 1944), p. 2.
17. Don Meikr. "Wesco Still Making, Selling Reliable Coal, Wood Stoves." News-Leader. (Springfield, MO. December 18, 1949), p. 3D.
18. Ibid.
19. Greene County Records. Greene County, Missouri. Book 1446, Page 341.
20. "MFA Announces Shutdown." Daily News. (Springfield, MO. July 10, 1982), p. 2B. Also, Greene County Records. Greene County, Missouri. Book 2764, Page 0838.

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**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
Greene County, Missouri**

Figure 1: Historic Advertisement. Retail Advertisement for nationally distributed Wesco stoves and ranges published by Woods-Evertz Stove Company in the program of the annual convention of the Missouri Retail Merchants Association. (Ad: c. 1910. **Beautiful Springfield**. From the collection of The Library Center, Springfield-Greene County Public Libraries. Used with permission)



**Woods-Evertz Stove
Company**

SPRINGFIELD, MO.

Manufacturers of

“WESCO”

**STOVES
AND
RANGES**

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**Wood-Evertz Stove Company District
Greene County, Missouri**

Figure 2: Historic Publication. Business attraction publication of the Chamber of Commerce promoting the industrial base of Springfield, Missouri, and highlighting the Woods-Evertz Stove Company. (Publication: c. 1942. The Growth of a City: Springfield, Capital of the Great Ozark Empire.)

Woods-Evertz
Stove Company

WOODS-EVERTZ STOVE COMPANY
STOVES

MANUFACTURING
INVESTIGATE AND YOU WILL LOCATE IN THE OZARKS

The great Ozarks Region is a treasure-house of rich, natural resources, including lead, zinc, iron, manganese, limestone, marble and many kinds of timber.

SPRINGFIELD is seeking enterprises strictly on a merit basis. We have much to offer to the manufacturer. Few cities can boast of only two and one-half per cent foreign born. Our central location, fine climate, excellent transportation facilities, low electric rates, nearness to power dams constructed and to be constructed, natural gas from trunk line system from mid-continent fields. Limitless coal from Kansas, Arkansas and Oklahoma offer every inducement.

MACHINE SHOP AND REFRIGERATION

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**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
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Figure 3: Historic Advertisement. Business directory advertisement for Wesco stoves and ranges published by General Wesco Stove Company, founded in 1902 as Woods-Evertz Stove Company. (Ad: 1952. Polk's City Directory Buyer's Guide. From the collection of The Library Center, Springfield-Greene County Public Libraries. Used with permission)

HEATING SUPPLIES—WHOLESALE

GENERAL WESCO DISTRIBUTING CO.

COLEMAN HEATING APPLIANCES

GENERAL WESCO STOVE COMPANY

WESCO STOVES and RANGES

Manufacturers' Agent for: General Steel Products Co.

521 N. Jefferson Tel. 2-7411

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**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
Greene County, Missouri**

Sources:

_____. "Big Industrial Plants Visited on Second Tour." **Springfield Leader**. Springfield, MO. July 28, 1914.

_____. "Expansion Program Planned: Stove Company Sold to New Corporation." **Daily News**. Springfield, MO. March 2, 1944.

_____. "Henry Schneider City's Seventh Fatality: Injuries Inflicted by Car Fatal to Clothing Merchant." **Springfield Leader-Press**. Springfield, MO. June 14, 1951.

_____. "Stove Works Start Up Full Blast." **The Republican**. Springfield, MO. January 19, 1909.

_____. "MFA Announces Shutdown." **Daily News**. Springfield, MO. July 10, 1982.

_____. "The Woods-Evertz Company Reopens." **The Republican**. Springfield, MO. January 20, 1909.

City of Springfield Demolition Records. City of Springfield Department of Building and Development Services. 1988, North Jefferson Avenue, Record 18, Permit B88-3264.

Dunham's Springfield City Directory. Springfield, MO: Dunham Directory Co., Publishers. 1922.

Fairbanks, Jonathan and Clyde Edwin Tuck. **Past and Present of Greene County, Missouri**. Indianapolis: A.W. Bowen, 1915.

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Holcombe, R.I., ed. **A History of Greene County, Missouri**. St. Louis: Western Historical Company, 1883.

Hoye's Street and Avenue Directory of Springfield, MO. Kansas City, MO: Hoye's Directory Co. 1894, 1896, 1899, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1909.

Meikr, Don. "Wesco Still Making, Selling Reliable Coal, Wood Stoves." **News-Leader**. Springfield, MO. December 18, 1949.

Merchants and Manufacturers Record of Springfield, Missouri. Springfield, MO: A. Owens Jennings, Publisher. 1906.

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Section 9 Page 22

**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
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Obituary. "William H. Woods." Daily News, Springfield, MO. March 13, 1946.

Obituary. "Deaths: Charles Evertz." Daily News, Springfield, MO. August 10, 1943.

Polk's Springfield City Directory. Springfield, MO: R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers. 1942, 1952.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. "Springfield, Missouri." New York: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. 1896, 1902, 1910, 1933, 1950.

Springfield Chamber of Commerce. The Growth of a City: Springfield, Missouri, Capital of the Ozark Empire. Springfield, MO. Springfield Chamber of Commerce, c. 1942.

Springfield Chamber of Commerce. Springfield Greet's You. Springfield, MO: Springfield Chamber of Commerce. 1919-20.

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Section 10 Page 23

**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
Greene County, Missouri**

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the subject property is determined as:

BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE INTERSECTION OF NORTH JEFFERSON AVENUE AND EAST TAMPA STREET, THEN PROCEEDING SOUTH THREE HUNDRED TWENTY-ONE AND NINETY-EIGHT ONE-HUNDREDTHS (321.98) FEET ALONG NORTH JEFFERSON AVENUE TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE INTERSECTION OF NORTH JEFFERSON AVENUE AND EAST PHELPS STREET, THEN PROCEEDING WEST FOUR HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE AND ONE ONE-HUNDRETH (425.01) FEET ALONG EAST PHELPS STREET TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE INTERSECTION OF EAST PHELPS STREET AND NORTH ROBBERSON AVENUE, THEN PROCEEDING NORTH THREE HUNDRED THIRTY-NINE AND SIXTY-NINE ONE HUNDREDTHS (339.69) FEET ALONG NORTH ROBBERSON AVENUE TO THE INTERSECTION OF NORTH ROBBERSON AVENUE AND EAST TAMPA STREET, THEN PROCEEDING EAST FOUR HUNDRED TWENTY-FOUR AND TEN ONE-HUNDREDTHS (424.10) FEET ALONG EAST TAMPA STREET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

Boundary Justification:

The selected boundary includes the land historically associated with the subject property's period of significance.

Maps:

1. **Sketch Map.** District map. Historic Springfield, Inc. 2003.
2. **USGS Map.** Springfield, MO.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Section Photos Page 25

**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
Greene County, Missouri**

Photographs:

The same is true for all photographs, except where noted:

Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
Area bounded by North Robberson and Jefferson Avenues and East Tampa and Phelps Streets
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri
Richard Lee Burton
May 22, 2003
Negatives on file with Historic Springfield, Inc.; P.O. Box 50305; Springfield, MO 65805-0305

- Photo 1:** Streetscape. View from south toward north along eastern boundary of subject property at North Jefferson Avenue. Buildings 3 and 4 at left (*Roll 2, Frame 13*)
- Photo 2:** Streetscape. View from east at northeast corner of subject property along northern boundary at East Tampa Street (*Roll 1, Frame 17*)
- Photo 3:** Site view from southwest corner of subject property at East Phelps Street and North Robberson Avenue toward south elevation of Building 6 (*Roll 1, Frame 2*)
- Photo 4:** Building 2. Primary south and side east elevations from southeast view (*Roll 1, Frame 8*)
- Photo 5:** Building 3. Primary south and side east elevations (*Roll 1, Frame 12*)
- Photo 6:** Building 3. Second story detail of rear west elevation (*Roll 2, Frame 8*)
- Photo 7:** Building 3. Detail of single door entrance with metal surround at primary south elevation (*Roll 2, Frame 10*)
- Photo 8:** Buildings 3 and 4. Side east elevations. View from northeast corner of subject property (*Roll 1, Frame 16*)
- Photo 9:** Building 4. Primary south and side east elevations (*Roll 1, Frame 14*)
- Photo 10:** Building 5. Primary east elevation (*Roll 1, Frame 33*)
- Photo 11:** Building 6. North elevation. View from northwest (*Roll 1, Frame 23*)
- Photo 12:** Building 6. Primary south elevation. View from southwest corner of subject property at East Phelps Street (*Roll 2, Frame 26*)

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Section Property owners Page 26

**Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District
Greene County, Missouri**

Nomination of the Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places is sponsored by Stove Works Lofts, LLC as a public benefit through the *Preserv-o-nomics Project* of Historic Springfield, Inc.

Property Owners:

Buildings 1 and 2:

Stove Works Lofts, LLC

P.O. Box 2965

Springfield, MO 65801

417-831-2676

Attn: Mr. Jason K. Murray, *Manager*

Buildings 3-6:

Willowbrook Foods

405 North Jefferson Avenue

Springfield, MO 65806

417-862-3612

Woods-Evertz Stove Company Historic District

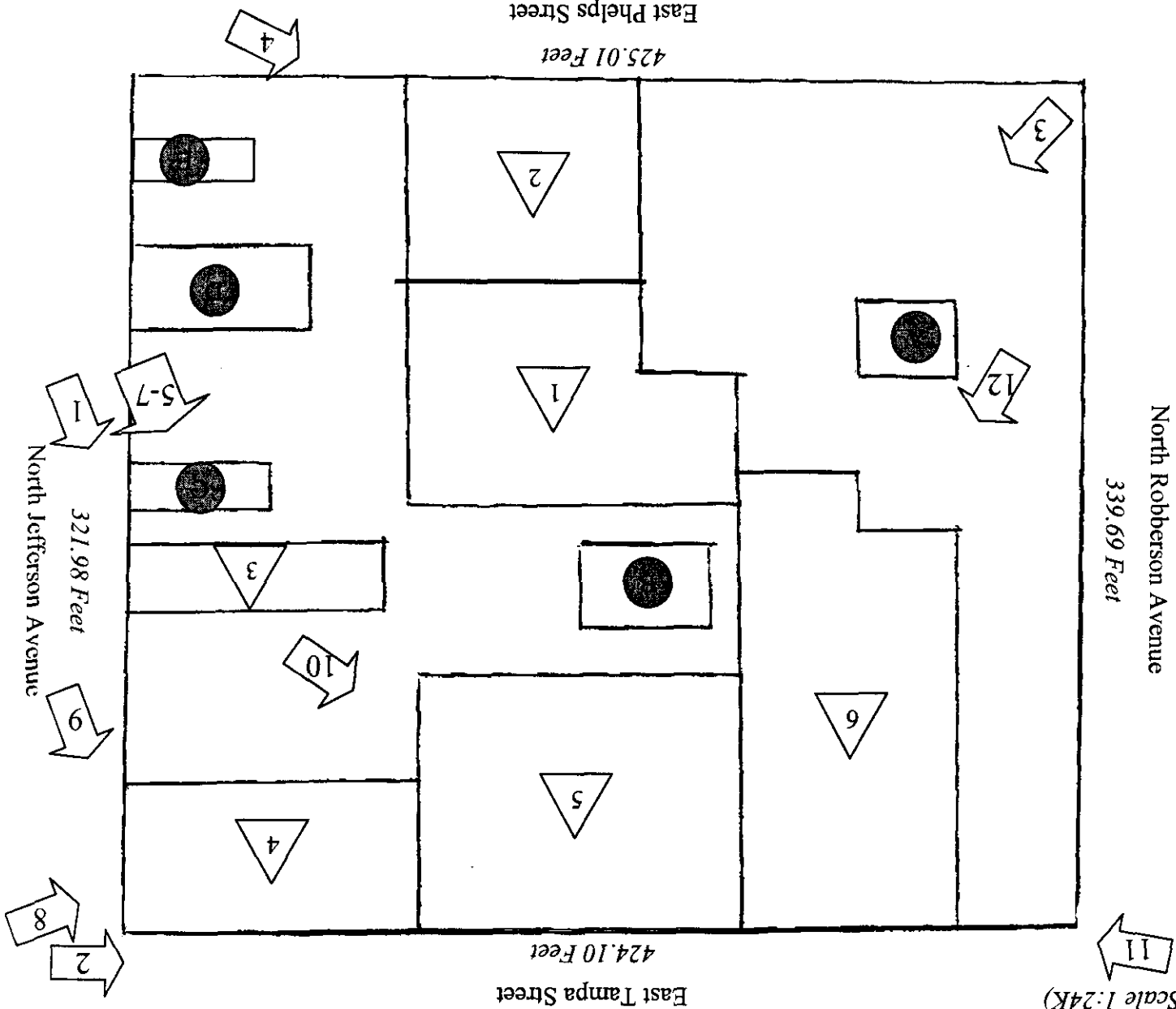
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri

District Sketch Map

(Not to Scale)

UTM Reference: 15/474225/4118580

(Scale 1:24K)



← = Correspond to numbered photographs

- Demolished Buildings - Post-1980**
- A. Boiler House (Site of earlier warehouse)
 - B. Maintenance Building
 - C. Office Building
 - D. Early Office Building
 - E. Use Unidentified

- Key:**
- Existing Buildings - All Contributing**
- 1. Warehouse
 - 2. Warehouse
 - 3. Pattern Building
 - 4. Assembly Building
 - 5. Factory
 - 6. Foundry

Source: c. 1980. MFA Mills Sketch Map





