



U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Buffalo District

News Release

FORMERLY UTILIZED SITES REMEDIAL ACTION PROGRAM

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Arleen K. Kreusch

716-879-4438

CORPS ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN CLEANUP

BUFFALO – The Buffalo District of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers is a leader in low-level radioactive waste cleanup, making significant progress with eight sites assigned for remedial action in 1997 under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP). The district completed the removal and safe disposal of over 161,000 cubic yards of material contaminated with low levels of residual radioactivity as a result of the nation's early atomic energy program. This work has been accomplished without a lost-time accident.

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The Corps is mandated to follow the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) Process for site cleanup. This process outlines the steps that must be taken to reach a final decision for each site and requires open involvement between the Corps, stakeholders and the community. Throughout the various phases of site assessment, remedial investigation and cleanup, the Buffalo District has encouraged and incorporated public participation in over 75 events, including site tours, information sessions, public meetings, employee briefings and presentations to local businesses and stakeholder groups.

Since Congress transferred management of FUSRAP from the Department of Energy to the Corps in late 1997, Buffalo District has completed cleanup of two sites.

The Bliss and Laughlin Site in Buffalo, N.Y., was the first FUSRAP site in the nation to be completed under Corps management. Buffalo District removed 60 cubic yards of contaminated material from the site and disposed of it in a licensed disposal facility. Shortly thereafter, the Ashland 2 phase of a 1998 Record of Decision was completed, with excavation and disposal of 45,500 cubic yards of contaminated material. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation agreed that cleanup of both sites met the criteria outlined in their respective Records of Decision.

Work progresses on the six remaining sites. To date, Buffalo District has completed excavation and disposal of approximately 105,000 cubic yards of material from the Ashland 1 and Seaway Area D Sites and is currently removing contaminated soil at the Linde Site in Tonawanda, N.Y. Demolition and disposal of Building 30 at the Linde Site is complete.

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At the Painesville Site in Painesville, Ohio, the district removed and disposed of 1,330 cubic yards of contaminated material. The Corps continues to investigate this site and is currently working on a focused Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study to further identify contamination and to develop cleanup alternatives.

"The Buffalo District's top priority for work performed under FUSRAP is protection of human health and the environment," said Lt. Col. Glen R. DeWillie, Buffalo District Commander. "We will continue to thoroughly investigate and clean up each site following guidelines that ensure this protection. Our investigations comprehensively address potentially contaminated soil, water, air and buildings."

On-site safety is emphasized throughout the program. Each site has a specific Health and Safety and Emergency Response Plan designed to protect on-site workers and the community. On-site workers receive annual physical examinations, attend daily meetings, and wear protective clothing. Protective clothing for workers at the Ashland and Linde Sites includes hard hats, safety boots, and tyvek suits (an overcover material that protects the worker from getting contaminated material on their clothing). Access to contaminated areas is restricted. Each employee working in a controlled area is monitored with personal air monitors and a thermoluminescent dosimeter (TLD) that measures the amount of beta and gamma radiation to which a worker was exposed. Work areas have air monitors, and site perimeter air is also monitored to ensure protection of the community. Test results from the monitoring confirm that activities at our FUSRAP sites are being conducted in a safe manner.

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The use of engineering controls such as watering down roads and excavation areas prevents the spread of potentially contaminated dust. Wind speeds are monitored to evaluate the need to stop work if the speed becomes too high, further preventing the spread of contaminated particles.

Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Studies are underway for the Niagara Falls Storage Site in Lewiston, N.Y., the Luckey Site in Luckey, Ohio, and the Painesville Site in Painesville, Ohio. The Remedial Investigation defines the extent of contamination and determines its associated risk to human health and the environment. A Feasibility Study develops and evaluates alternatives to address the contamination defined in the Remedial Investigation. Once alternatives are defined, a proposed plan with a recommended alternative is finalized and released for public comment.

During the next fiscal year, the Buffalo District is scheduled to release proposed plans for the Painesville, Luckey and Seaway Sites and for Building 14 and the groundwater at the Linde Site. Cleanup and restoration of the Ashland 1 and Seaway Area D phase of the 1998 Record of Decision is scheduled for completion in fiscal year 2001.

Three sites in Ohio were identified for potential inclusion in FUSRAP in June 1999. Under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Energy, once a site is identified for potential inclusion, responsibility for action is then transferred to the Corps. The former Harshaw Chemical Site in Cleveland; Dayton Unit III, the former Bonebrake Theological Seminary; and Dayton Unit IV, the former Runnymede

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Playhouse in Dayton, Ohio, are currently undergoing Preliminary Assessments.

The Preliminary Assessment is a review of available information and a site visit to determine the need for further action to ensure the protection of human health, welfare and the environment. The final Preliminary Assessment reports for these sites are scheduled to be available in late September. If at any time the analysis of available information determines that there is a threat to human health, welfare and the environment, a removal action can be initiated. At this time, Buffalo District does not anticipate the necessity for an immediate removal action at the three potential new Ohio sites.

The next phase for the former Harshaw, Bonebrake Theological Seminary, and Runnymede Playhouse is site inspection. During site inspection, the Buffalo District will perform initial sampling and analysis to further identify areas, levels and quantity of contamination.

Two additional sites in Dayton, Ohio; Dayton Unit I and the Dayton Warehouse, were identified for potential inclusion in FUSRAP in January 2000. Buffalo District has started a combined Preliminary Assessment/Site Inspection for these sites.

Buffalo District encourages public involvement in the decision-making process for each site. Complete Administrative Record Files are available for public review at the Corps office in Buffalo, and in selected local libraries near each site. Public meetings and information sessions are scheduled frequently and advertised in local newspapers. Interested citizens may also be added to site mailing lists upon request.

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Further information on each site is available on the Internet at:

<http://www.lrb.usace.army.mil/fusrap>. Citizens may also call the Corps toll free at 1-800-833-6390. Letters may be addressed to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District, ATTN: FUSRAP Information Center, 1776 Niagara Street, Buffalo, N.Y. 14207.

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