



Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property

Tonawanda, NY

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Buffalo District**

Building Strong®

May 2011

Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP)

FUSRAP was initiated in 1974 to identify, investigate, and clean up or control sites throughout the United States that were part of the Nation's early atomic weapons and energy programs during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. Congress transferred management of FUSRAP from the U.S. Department of Energy to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1997. When implementing FUSRAP, the Corps follows the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan.

Site Description and History

The Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property consists of two parcels owned by the Town of Tonawanda; the Town of Tonawanda Landfill and the Mudflats. The Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property covers approximately 170 acres in the Town of Tonawanda, Erie County, New York. The Vicinity Property is bordered by a residential area within the City of Tonawanda, a railroad line, Interstate 290 and East Park Drive. A Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation utility corridor separates the Landfill and Mudflats.

Waste disposal at the landfill by the Town of Tonawanda began during the 1930s and continued through 1989. Records indicate that the landfill was principally used for the disposal of construction and demolition material, yard waste, incinerator ash, and municipal waste.



As the result of a radiological survey performed in 1991 by the Department of Energy (DOE), a portion of the Landfill and Mudflats were designated together as a "Vicinity Property" of the former Linde Site under the FUSRAP.

Corps of Engineers Activities

The Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District completed a Remedial Investigation of the Vicinity Property in 2005. This effort was in addition to previous investigations performed by the DOE in the 1990s. During the Remedial Investigation, the Corps sampled and tested soil, surface water, sediment, and groundwater of the Vicinity Property for uranium, radium, and thorium. Small, isolated locations within the Vicinity Property were found with levels of uranium, radium and thorium above background levels, similar to radioactive material found at other FUSRAP sites in Tonawanda. A Baseline Risk Assessment was conducted as part of the Remedial Investigation to determine the risk to human health associated with exposure to these radionuclides.

The Baseline Risk Assessment, conducted in 2005 using information available at that time, concluded that risks to human health, for the current and reasonable future site uses in both the Landfill and Mudflats, were within the limits established in the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan.

Current Status

A Proposed Plan, covering both the Tonawanda Landfill and Mudflats, was released for public comment in the Spring of 2007. The Proposed Plan recommended no action as the Preferred Alternative, for both the Landfill and the Mudflats, based on the findings of the Remedial Investigation and the Baseline Risk Assessment.

In response to public comments received on the Proposed Plan, the Corps has decided to deal with the two parcels in the Vicinity Property separately, i.e., separate the Landfill Operable Unit from the Mudflats Operable Unit. The Corps signed the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Mudflats Operable Unit of the Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property in September 2008. The ROD states that no action is warranted on the Mudflats Operable Unit because the radiological risks, for all media, from radium, uranium and thorium present, are within the risk limits established in the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan based on a commercial/industrial site use, which is the reasonable future land use for the site. This decision is protective of human health and the environment.

The Corps conducted additional sampling on the Landfill Operable Unit of the Vicinity Property in 2010. The purpose of the sampling was to confirm the levels and extent of uranium, radium and thorium in the Landfill Operable Unit. Data from this sampling will be used to update the Baseline Risk Assessment to ensure that it reflects the realistic potential for human exposure in the Landfill, given its proximity to residential property. The Baseline Risk Assessment is currently scheduled for completion in the winter of 2012.

Administrative Record File

The Administrative Record File for the Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property contains CERCLA-related documentation used in the decision making process for the site. Reports and documents in the Administrative Record may be viewed at the following locations:

US Army Corps of Engineers
1776 Niagara Street
Buffalo, New York 14207 (by appointment only)

Tonawanda Public Library
333 Main Street
Tonawanda, New York 14150

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – BUFFALO DISTRICT FUSRAP TEAM

1776 NIAGARA STREET, BUFFALO, N.Y. 14207

Phone: 800-833-6390 (Option 4)

Email: fusrap@usace.army.mil

Website: www.lrb.usace.army.mil/fusrap/landfill/index.htm

