



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Buffalo District

Lake Ontario Ordnance Works Site

Military Munitions Archive Search Report

Fact Sheet

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District • March 2009

The Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP) was established in 1986 to address contamination caused by Department of Defense (DoD) activities. Sites no longer owned by the DoD as of 17 October 1986 are addressed under the DERP Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) program. The US Army is the executive agent responsible for the DERP-FUDS program. This fact sheet has been prepared to address community outreach needs and is consistent with provisions of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA).

Purpose: The purpose of this fact sheet is to notify the public that the US Army Corps of Engineers Buffalo District has secured funding and is launching a new project to complete a focused archival investigation regarding munitions handling operations at the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works (LOOW) Site during and after World War II.

Project Objective: The objective of this project is to search out, secure, and evaluate available historical documents regarding the handling or disposal of ordnance, munitions, or chemical warfare materiel by the Department of Defense at the LOOW. This project will complete the Corps historical research on these topics from known records sources. The findings of this project will form the historical foundation from which the Corps will base future decisions on whether additional technical investigations are warranted to ensure the protection of human health and the environment.

Project Team: The Buffalo District project team welcomes the addition of the ordnance engineers and historians from the St. Louis District who are Corps national-level experts in the military's production, distribution, and disposal of ordnance and munitions. The St. Louis District has been researching historical military operations since 1992.

Project Scope: This project will evaluate the historical record for all defense operations at the former LOOW to determine whether munitions, explosives, or chemical warfare materials were present. This includes the original bulk explosives (TNT) plant, the Northeast Chemical Warfare Depot (NECW Depot), and the US Army, Navy, and Air Force



Ordnance Handling at LOOW (circa 1944)

operations which occurred after World War II. Some of the specific questions for which the Corps will seek documentation and factual answers include:

- Where did the NECW Depot operate and what types of munitions or materials were handled?
- What type of explosives or ammunition were handled by defense operations at the LOOW?
- Is there any record of chemical warfare agents being present at the LOOW?
- Is there documentation regarding the reported discovery of a phosgene burial area at the LOOW in the early 1970s?
- Is there documentation of ordnance or munitions disposal activities at the LOOW?
- Are there additional records regarding property ownership, operations, and transfers related to the LOOW?

Project Tasks: The scope of this project includes performing an independent review of the Corps historical research to date and determining if additional archive sources exist anywhere in the nation.

The researchers will then analyze and integrate new information with existing information, and prepare a report of their findings.

The records secured during the archive search will be released to the public.

The Corps welcomes public input from community members, community groups, and government agencies regarding this project.

Project Schedule: This project is expected to take approximately 12 months to complete.

Historic Information: In preparing for this project the Buffalo District located and secured the original US Army historical report documenting the establishment, operation,



Ordnance Handling at LOOW (circa 1944)

and disestablishment of the NECW Depot. This report has been posted to the Buffalo District project website for public access. The report is posted in its entirety with the exception of personal information on individual employees who worked at the depot which is protected by the federal Privacy Act.

For More Information

For more information, please call the Buffalo District's toll-free public access line:

1-800-833-6390

Additional information regarding the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works (LOOW) Site can be found on the Buffalo District Website:

www.lrb.usace.army.mil/derpfuds/loow/index.htm

Please let us know if you would like to be included on the mailing list for the former LOOW Site particular FUSRAP Site. E-mail us at **derpfuds@usace.army.mil** or you may also contact us by mail:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
DERPFUDS Team
1776 Niagara Street
Buffalo, NY 14207



This fact sheet is printed on recycled/recyclable paper.