

**Pilon,** Raymond L LRB  
**From:** Pilon, Raymond L LRB  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 27, 2000 11:27 AM  
**To:** Brouwer, David J NAN02  
**cc:** Veith, William D HNC; Howell, Debra LRB; Brooks, George B LRB; DeWillie, Glen R LTC LRB; Hall, Christopher G MAJ LRB  
**Subject:** Incident Report - Discovery of Crystalline TNT at LOOW

Incident Report - Discovery of Suspected Crystalline , Former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works, Niagara County, New York

1. Type of Incident - Serious
2. Description - the Corps of Engineers is currently underway with an Interim Removal Action to remove a TNT processing pipeline and chemical waste sewerline on Chemical Waste Management Inc. property located at 1550 Balmer Road, Model City, Niagara County, New York. This action is being performed under the Defense Environmental Restoration Program for Formerly Used Defense Sites (DERP-FUDS) program.
3. Date - On Monday July 24, 2000 Severson Environmental Services Inc. was conducting routine sampling procedures on the TNT processing pipeline located on Chemical Waste Management property. A subcontracted explosive expert from ISSI Unexploded Ordnance Inc. was on location for all procedures. During the pre-excavation phase of test pit # 12 the explosive expert noticed an area, outside the exclusion zone, that contained what looked like crystalline nodules/lumps. Upon closer inspection the explosive technician found yellow/orange colored nodules/lumps. The area containing the suspect crystals measured approximately 2" x 2 1/2" and approximately 1/2" in height. Using a Field Testing Kit the explosive technician determined that the sample tested positive for the presence of TNT. During the procedure, the explosive expert noticed additional crystalline nodule/lumps on the surface the size of quarters and smaller.

- The explosive technician recommended that all operations be stopped and that the area be evacuated immediately. At that point all non-essential personnel left the area. The explosive technician proceeded to pour mineral oil on the suspected piles of crystalline TNT. The area (approximately 20' x 60') was roped off and flagged.

- The property owner was notified and Severson was directed to hire a guard to watch the site to insure that no one entered the area. The guard is posted from 3:30 PM to 7:00 AM daily. Contractor personnel are maintaining security during normal business hours.

The Corps requested that Severson hire a second explosive technician to help investigate the situation. A second ISSI Unexploded Ordnance Inc. representative arrived on site at 2:00 Wednesday July 26, 2000. The investigation is currently on-going.

- Buffalo District notified Huntsville Division staff (Bill Veith) of the situation and are involved in daily discussions as information develops.

- At this time, thirteen test pits along the TNT processing pipeline have been sampled. The explosives technician has tentatively identified nine of the thirteen sample locations as having TNT characteristics. It is noted that sample analysis is currently being performed for explosives and no confirmatory analysis has been received. The area is secure and appropriate investigations are continuing. The prime contractor has been directed to continue work only in the area of a chemical waste sewerline. The explosive technician team is involved in additional characterization activities and will report daily on recommendation which include an emergency removal and disposal option of the crystalline TNT on the surface.

- Additional information will be reported as it develops.

Raymond L. Pilon

Project Manager

(716) 879-4146