



U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Buffalo District

News Release

FORMERLY UTILIZED SITES REMEDIAL ACTION PROGRAM

Release #01- 03
January 17, 2001

Arleen K. Kreusch
716-879-4438

CORPS CLARIFIES ROLE IN FUSRAP

BUFFALO – The Buffalo District of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers is issuing this release to clarify its role in the cleanup of sites containing materials contaminated with low-levels of residual radioactivity covered under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP). The Buffalo District is the lead agency responsible for fifteen sites assigned to it under FUSRAP, seven of which are in the Buffalo/Niagara Region. Buffalo District is currently cleaning up the Ashland 1 and Linde Sites in Tonawanda, N.Y.

--MORE--

FUSRAP is an environmental program established in March 1974 by the Atomic Energy Commission under the authority of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended. FUSRAP was created to identify, investigate and take appropriate cleanup action at sites with radioactive contamination from the early atomic weapons program. Congress transferred FUSRAP from the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers in the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1998.

DOE's current role, under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Corps is to determine whether a site needs to be investigated for potential eligibility in FUSRAP. Once the DOE makes that decision, the Corps investigates the site following the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980, as amended. In 1997, Buffalo District was tasked with investigating and/or cleaning up eight sites that were already in the program. The Buffalo District has completed cleaning up two sites, is currently cleaning up two more, and is continuing investigation of the four others.

Since 1997, Buffalo District has been assigned the investigation of seven additional sites to determine whether they need to be included in the program. Locally, the Guterl Specialty Steel Corporation in Lockport, N. Y., was assigned to the district in September 2000. The former Harshaw Chemical Site in Cleveland; Dayton Unit I, Dayton Warehouse, Dayton Unit III, Dayton Unit IV in Dayton, Ohio; and the Scioto Laboratory Complex in Marion, Ohio are also potentially eligible and have been assigned to the district for evaluation.

--MORE--

The Corps' ultimate goal in managing FUSRAP is protection of human health and the environment. Although each site has its own characteristics, the Corps follows the same steps for each site as outlined in CERCLA to meet that goal. First, a Preliminary Assessment/Site Inspection (PA/SI) is performed. During the PA/SI, a site visit is made and available documentation is reviewed to evaluate the presence of radioactive residuals associated with activities performed by the Manhattan Engineer District (MED) or under the Atomic Energy Commission for the Nation's early atomic energy program. If the presence of radioactive residuals from these activities is confirmed above a level that impacts human health or the environment, then a recommendation is made to Congress to include the site in FUSRAP. A Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) further characterizes a site and provides sufficient information to support an informed risk-management decision regarding the most appropriate remedy for that site. A Proposed Plan is developed with the recommended alternative and released for public review and comment. After consideration of comments, a final determination is made on the remedy and a Record of Decision (ROD) is signed. The ROD certifies that the remedy complies with CERCLA, outlines the technical goals of the remedy, provides background information about the site, summarizes the analysis of alternatives, and explains the rationale of the remedy selected. If the selected remedy requires an action in order to reduce risks due to contamination, a design phase would be next, followed by a remedial action. Periodic monitoring may also be necessary following the remedial action. A removal action may be initiated at any time if human health or the environment is in immediate danger.

--MORE--

Throughout the various phases of site assessment, remedial investigation and cleanup, Buffalo District has encouraged public involvement in the decision-making process for each site, incorporating public participation in over 75 events, including site tours, information sessions, public meetings, employee briefings and presentations to local businesses and stakeholder groups. Information sessions are currently scheduled for the Ashland 1 Site, including Rattlesnake Creek, in Tonawanda, N.Y., on January 24, 2001, and the Guterl Special Steel Corporation in Lockport, N.Y. on February 6, 2001.

Complete Administrative Record Files are available for public review at the Corps office in Buffalo, and in selected local libraries near each site initially assigned to the district. An Administrative Record File includes documents the Corps used to support the selected remedy for 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.

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.

###