

News Releases from Region 1

EPA GIVES GO AHEAD ON EIGHT CLEANUP PLANS AT FEDERAL FACILITIES IN MASSACHUSETTS AND MAINE

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BOSTON--The Environmental Protection Agency announced today the approval of a 6.2 million cleanup plan for removal of contaminated soils at the Army Materials Technology Laboratory (AMTL) in Watertown, Mass.

The EPA also signed off on seven other plans at military facilities in Massachusetts and Maine that recommend no further action is needed. The no further action designation means the sites have already undergone extensive cleanup that has eliminated risk to public health and the environment. These facilities include: Loring Air Force Base in Limestone, Maine; **Fort Devens** in Ayer, Mass; and the Sudbury Training Annex in Sudbury, Mass.

"The citizens of Maine and Massachusetts deserve to inherit land that is free of risk to public health and the environment," said John P. DeVillars, administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency's New England Office. "These agreements demonstrate that EPA and the Department of Defense share a solid commitment to cleaning up and restoring these former military sites before the properties are turned over to surrounding communities for reuse."

EPA approval of these cleanup plans will allow the military to move forward and direct attention to more seriously contaminated sites. The total estimated cost for cleanup and long-term monitoring of these sites is approximately \$7.1 million. The military is paying for all cleanup costs while the EPA and the states oversee the cleanup projects.

"The Army Materials Technology Laboratory is a shining example of how progress is being made in the cleanup of former military properties," said DeVillars. "With EPA guiding the way through the Superfund process, the Department of Defense will continue to move ahead in the clean-up of contaminated sites at AMTL and in military installations throughout New England."

There are a number of common criteria EPA, the states, the Department of Defense and the neighboring communities use in selecting the best cleanup method for the site, including:

- protection of the environment and public health
- compliance with state and federal regulations
- long and short term effectiveness
- cost
- implementability
- and state and community acceptance.

The Department of Defense has included these sites for closure under the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) program. The base closure program involves the transfer of former military properties to a community for commercial, recreational or residential reuse and is aimed at revitalizing the economy of a community in a manner that is protective of human health and the environment.

The following are descriptions of the various cleanup decisions at the four federal facilities in New England approved by the EPA this year:

Army Materials Technology Laboratory in Watertown, Mass.:

The EPA approved two cleanups for soil and groundwater at the site. The soil cleanup involves excavation and off-site

disposal of contaminated soil, sampling soil left in place to ensure cleanup levels have been met, and backfilling excavated areas with clean fill. Since the groundwater at the site is not currently used as a water supply, nor is it considered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a potential future water supply, the EPA has concurred that no further action is needed. For more information call, EPA Project Manager Meghan Cassidy at (617) 573-5785.

Loring Air Force Base, Limestone, Maine:

The EPA approved decisions for four areas of the base. The EPA concurred with the Air Force that no further cleanup is needed at three of four areas after the air force excavated, removed and consolidated contaminated soils. The "no further action" determination means the sites do not pose a risk to the public or the environment. The fourth cleanup decision calls for monitoring groundwater beneath the landfills to ensure that the caps being constructed over the soils are preventing water from leaching through soil and contaminating the underlying groundwater. For further information on this site, call EPA Project Manager Mike Nalipinski at (617) 223-5503.

Fort Devens, Ayer, Mass.:

The EPA has determined that only long term monitoring is needed at the base's South Post Impact Area, which is currently used by the Army and National Guard for training purposes. Investigations revealed contamination in the soils and groundwater at levels that meet EPA cleanup standards. The EPA has therefore concurred with a limited alternative that includes long-term groundwater monitoring and an ecological management plan for the training area. If the property is released for other purposes in the future, additional assessments would be made. For more information on this site, call EPA Project Manager Jim Byrne (617) 573-5799.

Sudbury Training Annex, Sudbury, Mass.:

The EPA concurred with the Army that no further cleanup is needed at two former equipment testing and research areas of the annex. Based on recent sample results taken at the first area, a previous removal of 6 underground storage tanks has eliminated any current or future risk to public health and the environment. In the second area of the Annex, the EPA concurred no further cleanup action was needed. Investigations revealed that the removal of two underground storage tanks and PCB contaminated soil had eliminated any potential threat. For more information call, EPA Project Manager Bob Lim at (617) 223-5521.

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