

Reflections on 2000

Last year, the Memphis Depot began an important phase of the ongoing environmental cleanup program with the start and/or completion of a number of short- and long-term activities on the Main Installation and Dunn Field. These activities have moved the Memphis Depot and the community closer to the goal of safely restoring the Depot property for productive reuse.

- January 2000 – The Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Cleanup Team (BCT) finalized the Main Installation (MI) Remedial Investigation Report, and the Depot provided the document for public review. This report provided the BCT with an indepth scientific analysis of the environmental conditions at the MI and the potential risks to human health and the environment. The BCT used this information to identify areas that required cleanup. The Depot made the document available to the public in its four Information Repositories.
- February 2000 – The Depot provided the public with the chemical warfare materiel (CWM) removal project Site Safety Submission that was reviewed and approved by the Department of Army and Department of Health and Human Services before the CWM removal work began.
- March 2000 – The Depot held a Community Information Session (CIS) and Media Day to update the community about the Depot's CWM removal project. The project began with construction of a vapor containment structure (VCS) designed to protect the community during CWM removal activities. About 25 community members and media from every television affiliate in Memphis attended.

Representatives from the EPA and TDEC helped environmental cleanup team members from the Depot, the Corp of Engineers and their contractors cut the ribbon to officially launch the chemical warfare materiel removal project on Dunn Field.



- May 2000 – The CWM project team began removal activities at the first of three suspected CWM disposal sites at Dunn Field. The Depot began weekly briefings to update the community on the progress of the CWM removal project.
- May 2000 – Sverdrup Civil, Inc. began the cleanup project at the old paint shop and maintenance area in the southwest corner of the MI.
- August 2000 – Sverdrup completed the cleanup project at the old paint shop and maintenance area of the MI.
- August 2000 – The BCT finalized the Main Installation Feasibility Studies for Groundwater and Soil, which evaluated different cleanup alternatives, and the Main Installation Proposed Plan, which presented the BCT's preferred cleanup alternative for the Main Installation. The Depot provided the documents to the public for review and began the public comment period. The Depot also held a public comment meeting to present the Main Installation Proposed Plan.
- September 2000 – The CWM project team completed removal activities at the first suspected CWM disposal site at Dunn Field and began work at the second suspected CWM disposal site.
- October 2000 – The CWM project team constructed a second VCS at the third suspected CWM disposal site at Dunn Field.
- October 2000 – Additional monitoring wells were installed at selected locations on Dunn Field and in neighborhoods around the Depot as part of the Dunn Field Remedial Investigation.
- December 2000 – The CWM project team completed removal activities at the second CWM disposal site at Dunn Field. The CWM removal project entered its final phase as removal work began at the third suspected CWM disposal site. □



One of the 25 empty 500-kg bomb casings that have been uncovered at Site #24-A.

You Asked...

At the July 2000 meeting of the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), RAB and community members asked a number of questions about the Depot's environmental program. Here are some of these questions. More can be found in the Q&A section of the Depot's website at www.ddc.dla.mil/memphis.

Q. How did you choose samples to make sure you identified contaminated areas?

- A. The first part of the Remedial Investigation process is to identify, through historical document searches and interviews with former employees, areas where compounds used in past activities may have affected the environment such as spray paint or sand blast areas, hazardous material storage areas and vehicle maintenance areas. Sampling plans are then prepared with input and approval from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). Sampling procedures dictate that the first set of samples be collected from the location considered to have the highest possibility to receive a release or a spill within each area where past activities may have impacted the environment. Once a sample detects a compound, additional sampling moves outward in a circular pattern from

areas where the compound is found to define how far the compound is distributed. Additionally, in response to a suggestion from EPA and TDEC, samples were collected from random locations in an effort to identify any contaminated areas that may not have been included in historical documents or mentioned by former employees.

Q. What do you mean by cleanup?

- A. According to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), cleanup means those actions taken to prevent or minimize the release of or exposures to hazardous substances so that the substances do not move and cause substantial danger to present or future public health or the environment. This includes, but is not limited to, perimeter protection using fences, covering contaminated soil with clay, removing hazardous substances and associated contaminated materials, establishing institutional controls such as deed restrictions against residential development, and monitoring reasonably required to assure EPA and TDEC that such actions protect the public health and the environment.

Q. Is everything going to be cleaned up?

- A. All the areas of the Depot that present unacceptable risks to industrial workers will be cleaned up. The National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP) and the 1995 EPA Land Use Guidance