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NEWSPAPER ARTICLE "TESTS BEGIN TO LOCATE DIOXIN AT SEABEE SITE" NCBC
GULFPORT MS
12/11/1984
THE SUN

recommendations from law enforcement officials coming in advance of creation of a list of

done, at the local level. "The source of the original pool was subject to question,"

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Tests begin to locate dioxin at Seabee site

By TOM CHARLIER
Staff Writer

Technicians began taking surveys Monday hoping to pinpoint areas of dioxin contamination at a Gulfport Seabee Center site where the U.S. Air Force stored the herbicide Agent Orange during the 1970s.

The work by the engineering firm EG&G Idaho, which will last through the week and start up again in January, will precede the use of newly developed technology to cleanse the 12-acre storage site of dioxin, said officials at the Engineering and Services Laboratory at Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City, Fla.

Personnel from the Idaho Falls-based firm will map 20-foot-by-20-foot grids within the storage area and plant stakes at known areas of contamination, said Master Sgt. James F. Denny, media relations director at the laboratory.

The mapping work will help determine where soil samples should be taken, Denny said. The sampling will begin Jan. 7.

The Air Force stored 843,000 gallons of Agent Orange at the Gulfport facility between 1970 and 1977. The herbicide, which was used to defoliate jungles during the Vietnam War, was later incinerated on a ship in the Western Pacific.

Subsequent soil samples at the storage site revealed dioxin, a contaminant of Agent Orange,

in concentrations of as high as 200 to 300 parts per billion. And although no significant contamination has been found off the site, trace levels were detected in fish in a drainage ditch extending from the base to Turkey Creek.

Dioxin is one of the deadliest of all man-made substances. According to the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, concentrations of as low as 1 part per billion pose unreasonable risks in residential areas.

The Air Force attributed the dioxin contamination at the Gulfport site to small leaks in some of the 17,000 drums in which the Agent Orange was stored. The former storage site now is a restricted area, and filters and sediment basins have been installed along the drainage ditch to prevent dioxin from escaping.

The work at the base, which will cost the Air Force an estimated \$500,000 to \$700,000, is part of a \$1.7 million program to clean up and reclaim dioxin-contaminated areas at three Air Force facilities. EG&G, the contractor for all three sites, will identify the areas of highest contamination — most of which are only a few inches in diameter, Denny said.

"We need this kind of grid system to define the area of concentration to find where the larger spill areas are — rather than dig up the whole site," he said.

In February of next year, the Air Force will seek bids for a \$2 million contract to demonstrate dioxin-removal technology, Denny said. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is participating in the development of the technology, which officials said could be applied in cleanups throughout the nation.

Four known methods of decontaminating dioxin-laden soil include the incineration of the soil, which vaporizes the dioxin so it can be contained, and the use of chemicals to destroy the substance in the ground. Other technologies involve the exposure of dioxin to ultraviolet light, which breaks it down, and the use of solvents to "wash" the soil, separating the dioxin from it.

"There are a variety of technologies that we know about that can clean up dioxin. We just want to be as cost-effective and as quick as we can in cleaning this up," Denny said.

But he added that Air Force officials are "being very, very careful, making sure we get all of it," he added.

The Air Force now has spent \$7 million researching dioxin-contamination problems, Denny said.

"Our basic idea is to totally reclaim the areas and make them useful again. We don't want to end up just fencing off a lot of places," he said.

Monday - 12/11/84



TIM ISBELL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Technicians test site for dioxin

Technicians from the engineering firm EG&G Idaho work Tuesday to pinpoint areas of dioxin contamination at a Gulfport Seabee Center site where the U.S. Air Force stored the herbicide Agent Orange during the 1970s.

The work, which will last through the week and start up again in January, will precede the use of newly developed technology to cleanse the 12-acre storage site of dioxin, Air Force officials said.

Hel. - 12/12/84 SUN

Bell asks for more time to plan case

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JACKSON, Miss. — South Central Bell, planning to ask the Mississippi Supreme Court to reconsider its rejection of a 19 rate increase, has asked for more time to prepare its request, a company official said Tuesday.

"This decision is based on our review of the court's decision in the 1982 case, as well as the potentially serious impact that decision could have not only on this company and its employees but upon the economy of Mississippi," said J.N. McGowen, South Central Bell vice president for Mississippi operations.

The Supreme Court, by a 6-3 margin, ruled last Wednesday that the state Public Service Commission was correct in its decision holding the telephone company had not proved that it needed the additional \$98.2 million a year in revenue.

After the ruling, Commissioner Lynn Havens said he would push for "expedited hearings" on a refund schedule on about \$200 million South Central Bell has collected under the higher rate.

McGowen said that because of the complex nature of the case, "we have filed a motion for additional time in which to develop our petition for rehearing."

Bill Dawson, district manager for the phone company, said the motion filed with the court Tuesday seeks an additional 15 days in which to file the rehearing petition. The current filing deadline is Dec. 20; an extension would give the utility more time to prepare its case.

U.S. to return Cuba's 'undesirables'

By BARRY SCHWEID
AP DIPLOMATIC WRITER

WASHINGTON — The United States and

the United States.

The talks with the Cuban government are "basically wrapped up," said this official.

concern that legal problems raised in U.S. courts by Cubans who want to be set free might make it difficult to repatriate them.