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FACT SHEET 16 REGARDING THE EXPOSURE ASSESSMENT NCBC GULFPORT MS
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NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION CENTER

Gulfport, Mississippi
Installation Restoration Program

The Installation Restoration (IR) program is an environmental program conducted nationwide by the Department of Defense to identify and address contamination from past practices that do not meet today's environmental standards. This fact sheet is the 16th in a series informing interested citizens about the IR program at NCBC Gulfport. Fact sheets will be produced at program milestones and in response to other items of public interest. Distribution is coordinated through the Public Affairs Office at NCBC Gulfport. (601) 871-2393.

FACT SHEET 16: The Exposure Assessment

What is an exposure assessment?

The Seabee Center will soon begin a study to determine if chemicals found on and near the base have the potential to cause health or environmental problems. This study is called an exposure assessment.

The exposure assessment looks at possible ways in which people, plants and animals could come in contact with or be "exposed" to a particular material. If there is no contact with a chemical, then no adverse effects will occur in people, plants, or animals.

How will the exposure assessment be done?

There are three steps in the exposure assessment. First, a survey is completed to determine: 1) the people who live in the study area and the presence of plants and animals; 2) if there is any way for a contaminant to come in contact with people, plants or animals.

In the second step, health information gathered by State and Federal government health and environmental organizations is reviewed and compared with the results of the survey.

In the third step, the data from previous studies, the exposure assessment survey, and the government health organizations are summarized into a more complete understanding of the site.

Where will the surveys take place?

The surveys will look at the ditch systems both on and around the Seabee Center.

What will we look at during the survey?

The survey will look for five things:

1. *The composition of the local human population*, including location of homes near the ditch system. Because chemicals can affect people of various age groups differently, we will look at where people of different ages live within the community.

2. *Composition of the environmental population.* The kinds of different plants and animals that live in and around the ditch system.

3. *Local conditions*, including weather, soil or sediment type, plants, and speed of water movement in the ditches. This information will help us understand the ways in which chemicals can move in the environment.

4. *Possible exposure routes.* All possible routes for exposure to chemicals will be evaluated. These may include eating or touching sediment in the ditches; swimming or drinking the water in the ditches; breathing suspended soil particles; or eating fish or other animals collected from the ditch system. Similar routes of exposure will be examined for plants and animals.

5. *Local population health statistics.* The other thing that we look at is the current health of the community and plants and animals living there.