

SF EXAMINER  
17 SEPT 1987

## Santa Clara County

### Waste disposal at Moffett disputed

The U.S. Navy has been ordered by state officials to establish a schedule for disposal of hazardous waste at Moffett Naval Air Station. But a Navy lawyer said only the federal government has the authority to impose cleanup standards.

The Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Board unanimously voted Wednesday to issue a cease-and-desist order against the Navy for failing to clean up waste.

Under the order, a schedule for investigating the contaminated areas and procedures for cleaning up the sites must be developed.

The contaminated areas include subsurface and surface contamination and abandoned landfills.

Moffett Field occupies 7 square miles and has a complex industrial operation involving solvent and fuel storage, heavy equipment testing and maintenance, and hazardous waste generation and disposal.

Ground-water contamination was first discovered at the 54-year-old station, which houses 9,000 people, in 1963. According to the board staff, Moffett has violated numerous state and federal laws and has been slow in responding to the board's cleanup requests.

Martin Robertson, an attorney for the Navy, said Moffett Field is a federal facility and is protected from state regulations by.

"Our position is that the board does not have the power to enforce time schedules and cleanup activities," he said.

Robertson said the Navy is accountable only to the federal Environmental Protection Agency, which recently placed Moffett Field on its National Priority List for hazardous waste sites.

"We will include the board in our discussions with the EPA," he said. "But the cease-and-desist order you have set out may conflict with our process."