

# FACT SHEET

## Environmental Restoration Program: Site 4 – VLF Peninsula

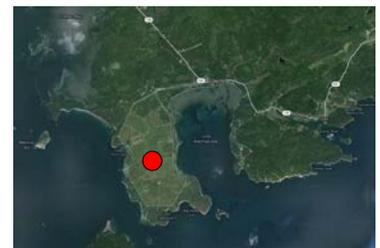


Naval Support Activity (NSA) Cutler  
Cutler, Maine



### Where is Installation Restoration (IR) Site 4?

The Very Low Frequency (VLF) Peninsula (Site 4) occupies multiple areas on the southern portion of Cutler's VLF Area. The VLF Peninsula is the location of the Cutler VLF transmitter which supports a northern antenna array and a southern antenna array. The antenna towers are approximately 1,000 feet tall. Each antenna is supported by one or two counterweights, which are each supported by a hoist tower approximately 200 feet tall. In addition, Site 4 includes six 90-foot support towers and soil contamination from the 24 VLF Transformer Houses.



### What is the history of the site?

As a result of paint deterioration by weathering processes over time, the towers were repainted since their construction in the late 1950s. According to historical documents, the helix houses and towers were originally painted around 1960. Records indicate that the towers were repainted in 1967-1968 and again between 1980 and 1984. During repainting, paint chips were water-blasted and/or manually scraped from the towers and buildings. At the time, no effort was made to collect the paint chips, as it was common practice. As a result of the removal activities and natural weathering, paint chips and particles have fallen onto the ground surface of Site 4. In 1996, paint chip samples were initially collected and found to contain lead and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). It was believed that PCBs improved the adhesive properties of the paint. Investigations also identified PCBs in shallow soil next to the transformer houses that originated from PCB-containing caulking material. PCBs in the caulk have leached from the roofline of the transformer houses into soil beneath the towers.

### What work has been done at the site to date?

From 1997 to 2008, the Navy conducted a construction project to remove the lead and PCB-laden paint from the towers. Numerous soil, sediment, surface water, and biota (earthworms, clams, mussels) samples were tested. The Remedial Investigation, Feasibility Study, and Proposed Plan were finalized in December 2016, July 2018, and August 2018, respectively. A public meeting was held in Sept 2018 to present the selected remedy (soil cover). The Record of Decision (ROD) was completed in Nov 2019. An Explanation of Significant Difference (ESD) was completed in April 2020 that changed the remedy to a protective soil cover.

### What work is planned for Site 4 in the future?

Complete the Remedial Design. The Record of Decision documents the selected remedy: installation of a protective soil cover and land use controls. The final soil remedial action is planned for 2021-2022.

### Where can I go for more information?

- Compliance with Environmental Laws and Regulations: Contact the Maine Department of Environmental Protection at (207) 287-7688.
- NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic, Norfolk, Virginia General Questions: Contact the PAO at (757) 341-1410.