



The US Navy informs you about the Vieques Cleanup

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Munitions Removal

The NAVFAC Atlantic Command contractors, Advent and MKM, continue removing unexploded ordnance and munitions scrap related debris under the Time Critical Removal Action being conducted in the east side of Vieques. As of June, over 99,500 munitions related items have been removed from 165 acres. Of these, 2,466 items have been detonated in place, and 1139 of these contained high explosive. The amount of explosive that have been detonated is eight tons. The work involves clearing by hand very dense thorny vegetation, which slows the removal action. NAVFAC Atlantic has submitted to the regulatory agencies a proposed plan to conduct controlled burning. If approved, the controlled burning of vegetation will facilitate the identification and removal of munitions, thereby reducing the risk to the workers on site and improving the pace and efficiency of the munitions removal on Vieques.

Munitions Related Scrap

The Naval Facilities Atlantic Command submitted to the regulatory agencies a proposed plan for the installation of a Munitions Scrap Processing Center. At the moment, we are consulting with the agencies about the requirements for the installation of the system. The purpose of the system is to process all range and munitions related scrap to ensure all explosive is removed from the items before sending them to a commercial recycler. The system consists of shear equipment, which cuts munitions and munitions related scrap that have been visually inspected and determined not to contain significant amount of explosive; a furnace, which uses high temperature to burn any residual explosive; and a shredder to cut into small pieces all munitions related scrap. The processing center will be installed within the boundaries of the Live Impact Area. Right now the only piece of equipment on site is the shear.

Background Sampling for East Vieques

The NAVFAC prime contractor collected background samples from East Vieques during mid June and first week of July. These samples will be used to determine inorganic composition (metals) in areas identified as not impacted by past Navy activities. The data will be used to compare to inorganic (metals) data collected for soil at individual environmental sites. EPA, PREQB, FWS and the RAB members provided comments to the background sampling work plan. EPA approved the work plan after comments were addressed. The Navy, EPA, and PREQB reviewed the public comments and jointly developed responses that were included in the final work plan.

Installation of Warning Buoys

As another effort to warn people to stay out of the danger zone of the east side of Vieques, the NAVFAC Atlantic Command will be installing warning buoys in the waters surrounding East Vieques. These waters and beaches may contain unexploded ordnance and it is dangerous to anchor and/or visit them. Also, while the contractors are conducting the munitions removal action, there is always the chance of unintentional detonation. Fragmentation from these detonations can reach long distances, exposing boaters within the danger zone to some risk. The Coast Guard issues Notice to Mariners that show the exclusion zone (the area boaters are asked to stay out of) during the execution of the removal work. We will also be monitoring the waters during the days removal work is conducted to warn boaters of the dangers in the area and ask them to move away from the zone. **Please, for your own safety remain out of the exclusion zone and follow the warning signs for the restricted areas.**



Community Members Trained to Work for the Vieques Cleanup

The NAVFAC Atlantic Command through one of its subcontractors conducted Occupational and Safety Training (OSHA - 40 hour and Site Specific Training – SST) at the end of June. The class was initially attended by 31 persons and 24 of those completed the course and received the OSHA certificate. 19 passed the physical and site specific training and began working on Eastern Vieques (LIA) the week of July 5.

The next community meeting (RAB) will be held on Vieques on September 14, 2006 from 5:00 to 9:00 PM. More information will be available closer to the date.