

**Meeting Summary
for the
June 8, 1992 Public Meeting
Presenting Results to Date on Remedial Investigations at
the Grumman Corporation and the Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Plant**

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) held a public meeting on June 8, 1992 to present and discuss the results of the Phase I Remedial Investigations (RI) being conducted at the Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Plant (NWIRP) and the Grumman Corporation sites located in Bethpage, Long Island. This meeting was held at 7:30 p.m. at the Bethpage High School located at the corner of Cherry and Stewart Avenues in Bethpage. Approximately 100 concerned and interested citizens were in attendance. The Phase I RIs were performed to examine the nature and extent of potential soil and groundwater contamination at both sites. The meeting also presented information on the remedial process and on Citizen Participation (CP) activities and defined a tentative schedule for future remedial activities.

The RI being conducted at NWIRP Bethpage is implemented by the U.S. Navy under their Installation Restoration Program (IRP). The IRP is designed to identify contamination of Navy and Marine facilities and lands resulting from past hazardous waste disposal practices and to identify and implement corrective measures. The Navy is implementing a two-phase RI. The Phase I RI, completed this spring, focused on characterizing three potential on-site contamination source areas at the NWIRP Bethpage facility. The Phase II RI will seek to further define these areas and determine what, if any, off-site impacts have resulted from past hazardous waste disposal activities. A Feasibility Study (FS) which will be conducted concurrently with the Phase II RI will define potential cleanup alternatives.

The Grumman Corporation (Grumman) is conducting their remedial investigations and cleanup under a legally enforceable agreement (consent order) with NYSDEC. Like the Navy, Grumman is implementing a two-phase RI. The Phase I RI was an investigation designed to determine the extent of on-site contamination resulting from Grumman operations. The Phase II RI will further study potential on-site source areas and further define the off-site boundaries of the contaminated groundwater plume.

Activities to Date

NWIRP Bethpage is currently in the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) phase of the Installation Restoration Program. The Phase I RI field investigations, which consisted of gathering technical data, were completed in February 1992. The RI results were presented at this meeting and are summarized in the Navy's May 1992 Phase I RI Report which is available in the information repository located at the Bethpage Public Library.

In addition, the Navy established a Technical Review Committee (TRC) in March 1992 to provide an opportunity for independent technical review and comment during the remedial investigations and the selection of a cleanup alternative. The TRC consists of representatives from the Bethpage Water District, Nassau County Health Department, NYSDEC, New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), Grumman Corporation, the U.S. Navy, and the Defense Logistics Agency.

Summary of Presentations

The public meeting was moderated by Ms. Susan McCormick, the NYSDEC Project Director. Ms. McCormick introduced the panel of speakers, representing NYSDEC, Grumman Corporation, and the U.S. Navy and served as moderator during the Question and Answer Session following the presentations. Copies of the speakers' presentation materials are attached.

The speakers, in order of their presentations, included:

- Dr. Joshua Epstein, Citizen Participation Specialist, NYSDEC
- Mr. John Barnes, Project Manager, NYSDEC
- Mr. Andrew Barber, Project Manager, Geraghty & Miller
- Mr. Frank Klanchar, Project Manager, Northern Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command
- David Brayack, Project Manager, HALLIBURTON NUS
- Lloyd Wilson, New York State Department of Health

Dr. Joshua Epstein, outlined both Grumman's and the Navy's public involvement programs. Dr. Epstein presented an overview of the Citizen Participation Program (CPP) including: the regulatory requirements for citizen participation, a description of the purpose of a CPP and typical CPP activities, and various ways for the public to become involved with the remedial programs.

Mr. John Barnes, NYSDEC Project Manager, provided an overview of the State's remedial program procedure. Mr. Barnes described both the Navy's and Grumman's remedial programs and their anticipated future activities.

Mr. Andrew Barber, Project Manager for Geraghty & Miller, Inc., the technical consultant to Grumman, presented Grumman's Phase I RI results. Mr. Barber outlined the objectives of Grumman's Phase I RI: to investigate source areas, to define the on-site groundwater flow regime, and to determine the nature and extent of on-site groundwater contamination. In addition, he discussed the Phase II RI work plan for off-site testing.

Mr. Frank Klanchar, Project Manager, Northern Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, discussed the Navy's IRP and the role of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command as both a technical and financial oversight agency. Mr. Klanchar presented information on the Navy's Community Relations Plan, the Technical Review Committee, and anticipated future remedial activities.

Mr. David Brayack, Project Manager for HALLIBURTON NUS, the technical consultant to the Navy, discussed the Navy's Phase I RI. Results of the Phase I investigation included identifying the three areas of concern at the Navy site, the contamination associated with those areas, any data gaps, and the general work plan for the Phase II off-site investigations.

Mr. Lloyd Wilson of the NYSDOH presented an overview of his role in the RI/FS process and the NYSDOH interpretation of the Phase I RI results as presented by the Navy and Grumman consultants. Mr. Wilson stated that there is no immediate health risk to the residents of Bethpage as a consequence of groundwater contamination stemming from these sites.

Summary of Comments

The panel of speakers was available to answer questions from the public after the conclusion of all presentations. Following is a summary of the questions and comments raised by the public during the Question and Answer Session of the meeting. Questions, responses, and comments have been rephrased and condensed into general categories for ease of reading.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1) **The lines of communication with the community are inadequate.**

Comments in this category indicated that there is a problem with the lines of communication between the responsible parties and the community. Specific concerns include:

- a) **Residents felt that they were not adequately notified about the public meeting.**

Dr. Epstein responded that the meeting announcement was distributed to local newspapers and to Newsday. In addition, Fact Sheets and meeting announcements were mailed to residents and concerned citizens currently on the contact list. This list included a substantial number of residents from Harrison Street. However, the contact list is continuously updated to include additional concerned citizens such as those who added their names to the sign-in sheet at the entrance to the meeting.

b) The terminology used at the meeting was too technical and too scientific.

Dr. Epstein responded to these statements by saying that his office reviews and edits community relations material to lessen the amount of technical language. In addition, he noted that it is important to give citizens technical information so that they can continue to participate in the remedial process.

c) The meeting format was intimidating.

Dr. Epstein responded that he understood that public meetings such as this one may be overwhelming. However, the public meeting is the current avenue for providing technical information to the public. In addition, Dr. Epstein stated that the Navy is planning on conducting a small number of interviews with interested and concerned parties to better evaluate the public's information needs.

d) Citizens believe they are not being provided with honest answers, and some answers are purposely being withheld.

Mr. Wilson responded by stating that although there is a groundwater contamination problem in the Bethpage area, the public health is not presently at risk. Additional studies will be conducted to determine the overall extent of groundwater contamination and those results will be presented to the public once they are known.

2) In 1983 these sites were first classified as one Class 2A site and in 1989 they were reclassified as separate Class 2 sites. Why has this process taken so long and should the sites be reclassified as Class 1 to expedite the cleanup process?

Ms. McCormick responded that when the Division of Hazardous Waste Remediation was created in 1986, there were only 50 people to work on over 1,000 sites statewide with a \$1.2 billion budget. At present, there are over 500 people within the division, a marked improvement. The remediation process is slow and requires lengthy and necessary investigations. The average site takes between seven and eight years from discovery to cleanup. Although the Grumman site is much larger than average in size, investigations there are moving more quickly than at most other responsible party sites. Remedial construction is anticipated to begin within two years.

3) Will the EPA become involved and, if so, will it cause an additional delay or repetition in the remediation process?

Ms. McCormick responded that the EPA has been involved in consultation with NYSDEC on these sites. If the Navy site is placed on the National Priorities List (NPL), EPA will likely become the lead agency. No delay or repetition of the remediation process is anticipated because of the current interaction between NYSDEC and the EPA.

4) Will the Feasibility Study look at the correlation between hazardous waste and health effects?

Mr. Wilson responded that Feasibility Studies evaluate alternatives for the most effective cleanup and are based on the examination of technical data from remedial investigations.

5) Is contaminated soil affecting the health of nearby residents such as children playing on the lawns?

Mr. Barnes responded that because there is contaminated soil there is reason for concern. However, because contaminated soils are currently located on site and contact with the soils is unlikely, risk is minimal.

6) Is there any contamination in the air relative to these sites that the residents of Bethpage should be concerned about?

Mr. Barnes responded that air quality was monitored at breathing zone height while bore holes were being dug and no contamination was found; thus indicating that there is no cause for concern.

7) Can I grow tomatoes in my backyard?

Mr. Wilson responded that vegetables such as tomatoes do not readily absorb Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) such as those associated with this site, and thus eating home grown vegetables should not pose a health risk.

8) A citizen stated that she felt that public health concerns were not being adequately addressed. These concerns include evidence of clusters of cancer and the relationship between airplane fuel, PCBs, and breast cancer.

Mr. Barnes responded that PCB contamination associated with these sites was found to be slightly less than the 10 parts per million used as cleanup level at the Hooker/RUCO Superfund site. NYSDEC will continue to monitor the PCB levels. The Navy anticipates investigating potential PCB contamination as part of their Phase II RI. Mr. Barnes also noted that these contaminated soils are not in direct contact with local residents.

Mr. Brayack also responded to this question by stating that PCBs are not associated with jet fuel, rather they have been used in electrical transformers. In general, PCB use has decreased over the past 10 years.

Mr. Wilson responded to the breast cancer issue by referring to a 1990 breast cancer study which found the Nassau County breast cancer rate to be 103 cases per 100,000 people. He also stated that the rates within the Bethpage Water District service area were lower than the Nassau County rate. By comparing the location of hazardous waste

sites with census tracts, the study indicated that: 1) tracts near hazardous waste sites had lower breast cancer rates than other tracts and, 2) higher socioeconomic status seemed to be the only link with higher breast cancer rates.

9) Why hasn't Grumman built air stripping towers to filter the contaminants out of the groundwater?

Ms. McCormick commented that although air stripping could begin to clean groundwater contamination, it could also affect the dynamics of the groundwater contamination plume, potentially deflecting the plume into various directions. As a result new investigations would then be required to locate and remediate the migrated plume.

10) Are the effects of Grumman ceasing their daily groundwater pumping activities being taken into consideration by the oversight agency?

Mr. Barber responded that Grumman is aware of the potential effects of stopping pumping and at this time Grumman intends to continue pumping. Mr. Barber also stated that the pumping has served to keep the concentration of contamination on the Grumman and Navy properties.

Mr. Barnes also responded that if Grumman changed their groundwater pumpage activities the groundwater contamination plume could potentially migrate. Mr. Barnes stated that NYSDEC is monitoring this potential problem situation.

11) If Grumman has been polluting in the past, why is NYSDEC still allowing Grumman to discharge water back into the ground?

Mr. Barber responded that water being discharged into all but one of Grumman's discharge basins meets the New York State drinking water standards and that all of the discharge basins are operating under permit.

12) Is there sulphur contamination at a former coal storage pile on the Navy site?

Mr. Brayack responded that potential contamination near the coal storage pile is not a result of the coal which had been stored there, but rather may be a result of solvents which may have been used in the same area.

13) Have any public supply wells tested positive to the contaminants mentioned in this meeting?

Mr. Barnes responded that one well tested positive and was closed in 1978.

A citizen also responded that a treatment facility was placed on the contaminated supply well between 1988 and 1989 and that current testing indicates that no VOCs are present and therefore the well is in use.

14) Is the Bethpage Community Park built on a landfill?

Mr. Barber responded that to his knowledge there is no landfill under the Bethpage Community Park.

15) What is the Navy's work plan for their off-site investigations?

Mr. Klanchar and Mr. Brayack both responded that the Phase II off-site work plan is currently being developed with input from NYSDEC and the TRC. The Phase II investigation will consist the installation and sampling of approximately six shallow (50 feet) groundwater wells. Some of these samples will be collected from the aquifer which supplies drinking water.

16) Will the presence of an impacted public supply well located to the northeast of the Navy site change the Navy's off-site investigations?

Mr. Brayack responded that current understanding is that groundwater flow patterns move southward and thus contamination stemming from the Navy site would not migrate to the northeast. However, additional computerized groundwater modeling will be conducted to better determine on- and off-site groundwater flow.

COMMENTS

The following are summaries of statements that were expressed by the public during the Question and Answer Session:

- 1) A member of the Bethpage Water District stated that although Grumman and Navy have been located in Bethpage since the 1930s, the Bethpage Water District will hold them liable for any contamination to the water for which they are responsible.
- 2) A member of the Oyster Bay Town Council stated that he feels Grumman is being proactive in an effort to get the Town Board to permit the construction of the Sterling Center. However, the Town Board will not grant permission for the development until all results from the remedial investigations (e.g., the extent of groundwater contamination and the size of the plume) are received. In addition, the Town of Oyster Bay will join the Bethpage Water District in monitoring the cleanup.

- 3) A citizen commented that an odor emanating from the Grumman site was not associated with the groundwater contamination or other pollutants released into the recharge basins on the Grumman site. The odor is not associated with the problems being discussed at this meeting.
- 4) The Bethpage Water District, in addition to complying with NYSDOH rules and regulations, tests daily and monthly for contaminants of concern. These tests results are available upon request. Currently, no contamination has been found in the water supply.