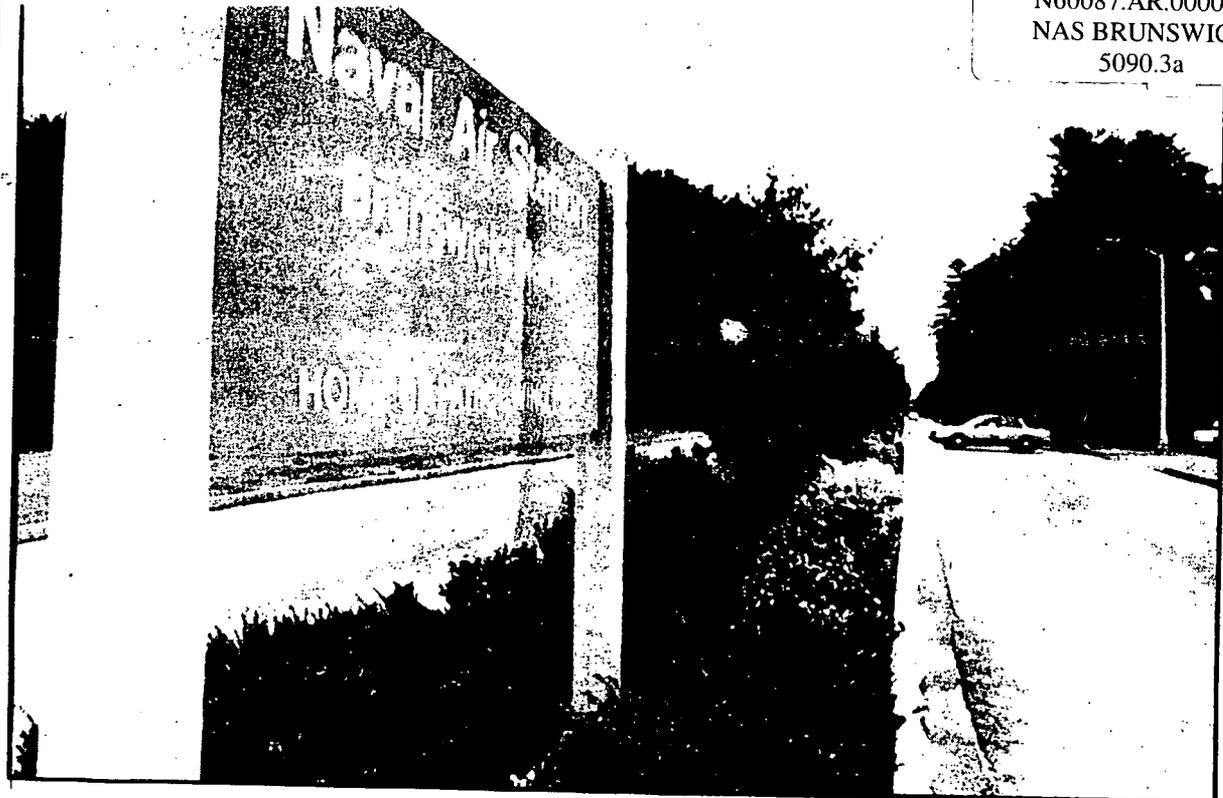


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Entrance to the Brunswick Naval Air Station, location of several now-closed dumps that were added to the national hazardous-waste Superfund priority list Tuesday. Associated Press

# Naval station dumps added to national Superfund priority list

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BRUNSWICK — Adding hazardous waste dumps at Brunswick Naval Air Station to the Environmental Protection Agency's "Superfund" clean-up list may ease some minds here, although the Navy maintains its old landfills pose no threat to the environment.

The military base here was one of 99 sites added on Tuesday to the agency's National Priorities List, bringing the total number of top-priority dumps and contaminated facilities to 951 nationwide.

The Union Chemical site in Hope failed to make the Superfund list despite expectations it would. Maine sites that were already on the list are the McKin dump in Gray, the Saco tannery pits, the O'Connor junkyard in Augusta, the Winthrop landfill, and the Pinette salvage yard in Washburn.

Being included on the Superfund list doesn't mean a site will automatically be a candidate for clean up.

"Our field investigations, monitoring wells and soil and water analyses do not even remotely suggest the possibility of any immediate danger," the Navy said in a statement issued here Tuesday afternoon.

"Nevertheless, testing and monitoring will continue as long as there is any potential for long-term environmental effects," the statement continued.

"The effect of NAS (Naval Air Station) being on NPL (National Priorities List) is that our continuing work at our landfill sites must meet EPA-state standards, in addition to DoD (Department of Defense)

standards," the statement said.

At least one of the old sites, used between 1942 and 1975 when such landfilling was legal, is about a quarter of a mile from wells which feed the public drinking water supply for much of Brunswick and Topsham. That site was used for disposing wastes from building and construction projects and a minimum of 1,000 pounds of solvents was deposited there, according to a study of the area.

Brunswick-Topsham Water District Superintendent Peleg Bradford said Tuesday the district has been monitoring the nearby wells on a regular basis and "nothing has shown up."

But, "it is a dump," Bradford said. "We don't know precisely what might be contained in them. It's a big question mark."

"We would like to see the money so (the dumps) can be eliminated," he said.

While there has been no contamination of the water supply, "if there were a breakthrough, it could hurt the groundwater in the area," Bradford said.

"The ideal solution is to get it out of there," Bradford said.

The sites were first identified by a private consulting firm hired by the Navy when it participated in a DoD "installation reconstruction program," according to the prepared statement.

A study completed by a Pennsylvania firm in June 1983 concluded that "while none (of the seven dump sites) posed immediate threats, several posed potential long-term threats" to area water supplies, a Navy spokesman said in September 1984, after Rep. James J. Florio, D-N.J., made public a list of hazardous dump sites on

private property and on federally owned land.

A month later, the naval facility was recommended to be added to the EPA's superfund list of priority locations for clean up, although at that time, federal installations were not eligible for funds for cleanup.

According to the EPA, two of the seven waste sites at BNAS were used for burying the station's household and office wastes. The others were used for disposal of acid, caustic and asbestos wastes.

Among the substances identified as being dumped on the air station were out-of-date chemicals, waste oils, pesticide and herbicide containers and degreasers, isopropyl alcohol, outdated paints, solvents and a substance identified only as "DANC."

In early 1985, following a study done by E.C. Jordan Co. of Portland, local officials were told that there was little immediate risk from the materials in the dump sites.

"I think that it is good to have the problem recognized and to have it cleaned up without local funds," Brunswick Town Council Chairman Michael L. Austin said Tuesday.

If the sites are cleaned up, "our water resources will not be a concern," Austin said.

"Those people who were concerned will have their fears eased," Austin said.

The federal defense installation was able to be put on the EPA list following a congressional renewal and expansion of the Superfund program. There are 32 such federal sites designated by the EPA, mostly DoD facilities.

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