



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 2 350-10 0

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INFO	ACT	DATE	INIT.
25		October 1989	11/6
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The Honorable John H. Chafee
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

COPY TO FILES
RETAIN 50 RETURN
REPLY WITHIN 7 DAYS

Dear Senator Chafee:

Thank you for your letter of September 21, 1989, about cleanup operations at the Melville Marine Industries' pier area in Portsmouth. The Navy shares your concern in this matter, and we agree that cleanup operations there should be conducted in an appropriate and expeditious manner.

When this property was sold to Rhode Island in 1983, three sites within the 70 acre parcel were considered to contain hazardous or potentially hazardous materials. Since then, we have demolished and removed contaminated facilities at two of these sites, a former sewage treatment building and associated sludge drying beds.

The third site is the former Melville North Landfill. We will advertise a contract to remove oil contaminated soil piles on the surface of the old landfill in about 30 days, with the work to begin in early 1990. However, contaminants may also be below the surface, a possibility we must assess as part of a remedial investigation and feasibility study. We should complete this study in November 1990, and will use it as our basis for determining what remedial actions are required to completely clean the site.

While the investigation and cleanup process is lengthy, it is absolutely necessary that the Navy proceed in a deliberate manner, and in full accordance with guidelines mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency. This process ensures each hazardous waste site is properly remediated on a priority basis, depending on the nature of pollutants found in the investigation.

We appreciate Melville Marine Industries' offer to conduct its own investigation and cleanup, however, the Navy will conduct the cleanup because we are liable for any contamination on the site. We are unable to guarantee reimbursement for any work performed by the property owners.

Blind copy to:
OP-04
OP-44
OP-45
NAVFAC
COMMANDER, NAVAL EDUCATION

LCDR J.J. PAULIS, USN
4E577/x59705
jjp/10 OCTOBER 1989
DCN:9U011805
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Let me assure you that the Navy is diligently pursuing complete cleanup of the property as quickly as possible within approved guidelines and funds. Your support of funding requested in the President's budget for the Installation Restoration Program (IRP) will help ensure timely completion of this and other hazardous waste remediations. We would be happy to brief you or your staff on this or any other aspect of the IRP.

As always, if I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



H. Lawrence Garrett, III
Secretary of the Navy