

2

# Shipyard

Continuation

pact on the environment was widespread. The open storage of batteries

and other materials has resulted in lead and other heavy metals contamination of the soil. Rainwater running over and through the soil eventually carried a portion of the contaminants into the Piscataqua River.

About two weeks ago a private contractor began smoothing over the salvage area in preparation for the capping procedure. Two layers of fabric and bentonite clay have been spread over the 2-acre site and will be topped off with 12 inches of rock

and cement. This project is slated for completion by the end of the month.

"The Navy decided to take this corrective action while the environmental investigations are being conducted on the rest of the shipyard to protect the river," said Debbie Carlson, Naval Facilities Engineering Command project manager.

The concrete cap is designed to prevent further runoff of the contaminated soil into the river. The cap will also prevent the soil from being washed into the groundwater and from being carried by the wind to other areas.

The Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is now operating with a corrective action permit issued by the EPA. The permit allows the shipyard to study and clean up past disposal areas of hazardous waste such as lead and other chemicals at the yard. The salvage yard, however, did not pose an immediate threat.

YORK COUNTY COAST STAR

KENNEBUNK, ME  
WEEKLY 13,887

NOV 24 1999

NEW ENGLAND NEWSCLIP AGENCY, INC.

125 LK

## Battery dump capping only the beginning

1

• Shipyard action first of many remedial actions expected.

EPA By Chris Cleveland  
Star Writer

KITTERY — Two acres of lead-contaminated soil at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is being capped by cement and sealing fabrics to prevent further seepage of contaminants into the Piscataqua River.

The \$300,000 capping project, which began in mid-October, is an interim corrective measure. The project is part of the Shipyard's Environmental Protection Agency permit for cleanup of past hazardous waste disposal sites and, according to the shipyard's project engineer, marks a shift from investigation and data collection toward the "corrective action phase."

The shipyard's salvage yard is located on the south side of Seavey Island adjacent to the Piscataqua River and can be seen from New Castle, N.H.

Prior to 1970, the shipyard recycled large lead-acid batteries at the salvage yard before knowledge of the lead's potential im-

See Shipyard, page 14A

3

"Since the contamination at the Shipyard salvage yard was not serious enough to cause an immediate threat to human health or the environment, the Shipyard was not required to take immediate action to clean up the yard," stated James Tayon, shipyard project engineer, in a Nov. 22 press release.

The capping project also includes the installation of new storm water control catch basins and piping to help keep the rain water clean before it runs off the surface of the salvage yard and into the river.

The work is being conducted by STS Construction of East Lebanon, with health and safety monitoring being done by Industrial Hygiene of New England, a Biddeford company.

Tayon said that the shipyard's technical review committee is entering its "action phase" after extensive investigation and data collection. The TRC is now discussing

protection standards for air, water, ground and groundwater.

"This is where we have to start looking at the standards that are necessary for the cleanup," said Tayon.

"We are proposing standards that will protect human health and the environment now and in the future for each medium: soil, groundwater, air, surface water, and sediment and we are proposing standards for any releases of contaminants from the 13 former disposal sites on the yard," said Carlson.

The TRC includes shipyard and Navy engineers, residents of the Kittery-Portsmouth area, Kittery's town manager, EPA and Maine Department of Environmental Protection regulators, and trustees from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Maine Department of Marine Resources.

Tayon said that the cleanup standards being proposed are based on state and federal regulatory guidelines, naturally occurring background levels of chemical contaminants and a human health risk analysis performed as part of the shipyard's investigation. Maine DEP and the EPA will make the final determination of the proposed standards.

The TRC has been one member short since the resignation of Kittery town councilor Maria Barth, who was recently elected council chairwoman. Anyone wishing to nominate a replacement for Barth should contact Jim Tayon at 207-438-3832.

"We would like someone who not only will be willing to review our technical work, but also, we want that person to be available to members of the public who are interested in the project," said Tayon.