

# Naval base expects a clean bill

## *Says waste sites are no hazard*

By Debra Diamond  
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An extensive investigation of 10 waste sites at Willow Grove Naval Air Station in Horsham Township will give the facility an environmentally clean rating when the final report is released next year, an NAS official said last week.

Navy installations across the country are participating in the U.S. Navy Installation and Restoration Program, which was funded by the U.S. Superfund Act in 1986.

The three-year program is designed to establish hazardous disposal sites and to correct environmental problems that may have resulted from past practices.

Of the 10 potentially hazardous sites studied at Willow Grove, so far none proved to be a serious environmental consequence, said Lt. Cmdr. Michael J. Zook of the U.S. Civil Engineer Corps.

"We've found no pollutants to endanger anyone," Zook said.

NAS invited representatives from Horsham Township, the state Department of Environmental Resources and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to participate on a technical committee charged with reviewing the results of the investigation.

Representatives met for the first time last week.

"The Department of Defense has to be congratulated on the effort and energy they've put forth to identify and rectify any hazardous materials from the past," said township Manager Michael J. McGee, who attended the meeting.

"If all of us lived up to this standard (of testing), this would be one heck of a place."

The program kicked off in 1986 with the identification of the possibly damaged sites, said Zook. Phase two of the program, testing of the sites, is now under way and will be completed by December 1989.

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Sites determined to harbor hazardous material must be cleaned up during phase three of the program. NAS officers, however, do not believe a third phase will be necessary, Zook said.

The 10 sites that required extensive toxic waste testing include:

- Four landfills areas, now closed, once used by the air base for dumping all hazardous materials. NAS now transports everything to the Montgomery County landfill.

- Two abandoned rifle ranges used from 1942-1977.

- A fire training area where planes were burned during training maneuvers.

- The site of a 3,000-gallon oil spill that occurred in 1978 when a tanker truck overflowed.

- The ground under an abandoned oil tank where there was a potential for ground water pollution.

- A Navy fuel farm that housed large tanks used to fuel planes.

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