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NEWS RELEASE ANNOUNCING COMPLETION OF RECORDS SEARCH TO DETERMINE  
HISTORIC WASTE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AT NAS FORT WORTH TX  
9/14/1984  
AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

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**NAVAL AIR STATION  
FORT WORTH JRB  
CARSWELL FIELD  
TEXAS**

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**ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD  
COVER SHEET**

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# United States Air Force

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Office of Public Affairs

AIR FORCE SYSTEMS COMMAND

14 September 1984

RECORDS SEARCH COMPLETED  
FOR AIR FORCE PLANT 4 WASTE SITES

U.S. Air Force and General Dynamics officials today announced completion of an intensive records review to determine historic waste management practices, including the location and status of remaining former hazardous waste disposal sites at the General Dynamics manufacturing facility, Air Force Plant 4, Fort Worth, Texas. The review identified sites requiring follow up action to the ongoing soil and groundwater monitoring program at the plant. No immediate threats to public health were identified.

Initiated by Aeronautical Systems Division, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, the records search was conducted under procedures for Phase I of the Department of Defense Installation Restoration Program ("IRP"). The purpose of the IRP is to assess past waste management practices, identify the location and status of former disposal sites at DOD installations, and to take appropriate remedial action if required. The Air Force portion of the IRP includes Air Force-owned industrial facilities as well as its bases.

The Phase I survey supplements an initial review begun two years ago and completed in May 1983. That review, conducted by Hargis & Associates, Inc., Tucson, Arizona, an engineering firm under contract to General Dynamics Corp. and the Air Force, led the Air Force to pursue immediate removal of contaminated soil and pollution control at four sites found to be contaminated at the plant. Begun in April 1984, the IRP Phase I survey was completed in

chrome disposal pits, fuel storage sites, and scrap metal disposal pits; current, concrete-lined wastewater collection basins; sites of previous fuel spills, former fire department training areas; and the location of solvent lines which were drained, capped, and abandoned in 1944.

Although the report recommends that no follow-up action be taken at the Nuclear Aerospace Research Facility area, the Air Force will conduct a field investigation there. This is to ensure that there is no contamination problem in the area, and to underline the Air Force's commitment to a full evaluation of Plant 4 property.

The Phase I report states that no direct evidence was found to indicate that migration of hazardous contaminants has occurred beyond the Air Force Plant 4 boundary. However, indirect evidence indicates that there has been migration of hazardous contaminants beyond the Air Force Plant 4 boundary in the past. Contaminated groundwater beneath the west employees parking lot was determined in late 1982 to be seeping into a buried stormwater pipe and subsequently discharging into Meandering Road Creek. This condition was eventually eliminated through remedial activities in the vicinity of the parking lot.

Air Force officials emphasize that there is no evidence of an imminent public health hazard, although areas of contaminated groundwater have been identified on plant property. The contaminated groundwater is not used by the plant or area residents for drinking water. Testing results have shown no evidence of offsite migration to subsurface water supplies.

The Air Force and General Dynamics, in cooperation with EPA, state and local authorities have been and will continue to work together to develop appropriate remedial actions. Major sources of contamination were previously removed as an immediate response action. Now, the field investigation will

be continued to collect sufficient data to develop a long term remedial action plan.

CH2M Hill, Gainesville, Florida, a private engineering firm under Air Force contract, conducted the Phase I records search at the plant. Findings of the contractor are being coordinated with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region VI; and State of Texas and local environmental and public health officials. The Air Force and General Dynamics continue to work closely with these agencies in the management of environmental programs at Plant 4.

According to Air Force officials, further follow-on action will be initiated to determine the exact nature and magnitude of any remaining potential problems resulting from past waste disposal practices, and the need for corrective action as appropriate. Phase II of the IRP at the plant will include confirmation of the findings of the Phase I study, as well as further soil sampling and groundwater monitoring to define the extent of contamination. This Phase I assessment will be integrated into the ongoing investigation at the plant.

The final report of the Phase I records search findings will be available to the public for review at the Fort Worth Public Library, Central Branch, 300 Taylor Street, Fort Worth, and the White Settlement Public Library, 214 Meadow Drive, White Settlement. The report also will be available to the public upon request from the National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, Virginia 22161.

NARF Q's and A's

Q-1. What is the NARF?

A-1. NARF stands for Nuclear Aerospace Research Facility.

Q-2. Which government agency was responsible for, or in charge of, activities at the NARF?

A-2. Work at the NARF was done by General Dynamics under contract to the Air Force and NASA.

Q-3. Did the Air Force have jurisdiction over the AF Plant 4 property in the 1950s.

A-3. Yes.

Q-4. Was the work done at the NARF classified?

A-4. Yes. However, in general terms we can say that there were extensive research and development activities in the NARF during the 50s and 60s. Various materials were subjected to nuclear radiation to determine what effect this would have on their physical property. Electrical and mechanical components were irradiated to determine what effect this would have on their operability. Work was also conducted on development of a nuclear powered aircraft. In addition, aircraft exposed to radiation were decontaminated at the NARF.

Q-5. Has the existence of the NARF at AF Plant 4 ever been publicly announced? When? By whom? If not, why not?

A-5. We have not found any documentation of such an announcement, but since

the work done at the NARF was classified, the fact that there may not have been an announcement is understandable.

Q-6. Has the water in Lake Worth ever been tested for nuclear contamination? When? By whom? If never tested, why not?

A-6. During the period that the NARF was in operation, the water in Lake Worth was tested monthly by General Dynamics and monitored by the Air Force.

Q-7. Who was the contractor that carried out the clean up activities when the NARF site decommissioned? Which government agency monitored the cleanup?

A-7. The excavation work was done by Beckman Construction of Fort Worth. Kim Nuclear Systems of Barnwell, South Carolina, took title of and removed all of the waste when the site was decommissioned. The cleanup was monitored by the Air Force.

Q-8. On Page IV-68 of the report, it says that "Post-closure at this site reportedly found no remaining contamination." Isn't it true that nuclear contaminants can never be totally cleaned up and that there always will be some residual level of contamination?

A-8. Yes. The Air Force believes the report should have said that any residual contamination is well within safe limits.

Q-9. Do you have the "post-closure" report? Can we have copies? If not, why not?

A-9. We have a Final Progress Report by General Dynamics on the

decommissioning of the NARF and a Nuclear Safety Survey conducted by the Air Force Directorate of Nuclear Safety. These documents are available for anyone who would like copies.

Q-10. Has radioactivity been measured at the NARF area since its decommissioning? When? By whom? What were the results?

A-10. Yes, the area was checked by the Air Force in 1975 and 1976. The results indicated that there was no public health hazard.

Q-11. Can we have copies of the reports?

A-11. Yes.

Q-12. Does the Air Force's intention to do a follow up field investigation at the NARF area mean that you do not have faith in the post-closure report which indicated that there was no remaining contamination, or in subsequent radioactivity checks at the site?

A-12. Although we do have faith in previous checks at the site, we also believe that this is an important matter and that another look is warranted to confirm that the area is safe.

Q-13. Who will do the follow up investigation at the NARF area?

A-13. The Air Force will contract for the follow up investigation.

Q-14. Why was the NARF shut down?

A-14. Following the curtailment of a joint NASA-AEC program in early 1972, the Air Force announced the decision to decommission the NARF. The decommissioning plan was coordinated with the AEC and NASA and approved

by the Air Force Directorate of Nuclear Safety.

Q-15. What is a slightly contaminated solution?

A-15. This is water containing very low levels of radio activity that is within safe limits and does not pose a threat to health or the environment.

AIR FORCE PLANT 4 Q's and A's

Q-1. The report originally prepared by the contractor was revised before release to the public. Why was this done?

A-1. Air Force technical representative reviewed the draft report prior to publication, just as any other Installation Restoration Program ("IRP") report is reviewed in accordance with the DOD IRP.

Q-2. When will Phase II cleanup actions begin?

A-2. Dr. Hargis, the consultant, is already in the process of integrating the findings of the Phase I report into the ongoing investigation at the plant. This action will not cause any real delay in taking remedial action. Only by carefully defining the problem can we ensure that proper actions are taken. I also would like to remind you that the Air Force has already taken actions to remove high concentrations of contaminated soil at several sites.

Q-3. We have heard that Plant 4 is being added to the EPA's National Priorities List ("NPL") which contains the 400 most hazardous waste sites in the United States. Is this true, and how does the Air Force feel about that?

A-3. The EPA is responsible for determining sites to be placed on the NPL based on an EPA scoring system. The AF has provided EPA a copy of the Phase I IRP report which will help them determine if AF Plant 4 should be on the NPL. Suggest you check with EPA if you have further questions.

Q-4. What is the date of the contract award for prior contaminated soil removal, to what firm was it made, and what was the total dollar value for the work performed?

A-4. The award was from General Dynamics to Chemical Waste Management, Inc., Houston, Texas. Date of the contract award for cleanup operations at the chrome pit and dye yards is November 1983. In addition to the \$1.33 million they have received for cleanup at those two sites, Chemical Waste Management also received \$1.45 million for cleanup of the abandoned oil pit and fire training area. This contract was awarded in July 1983.

Q-5. How many monitoring wells have been dug around the plant boundary?

A-5. The program involved initial installation of 31 upper-zone monitoring wells and 4 in the regional aquifer--which we continue to monitor under the supervision of our hydrogeologist. Additional monitoring wells will be installed, as necessary, to pinpoint the area and extent of contamination.

Q-6. How long will these wells continue to be monitored?

A-6. As long as the Air Force and the EPA deem necessary to ensure that no environmental damage is being done, and that local drinking water is not being adversely affected.

Q-7. The Phase I Report says that, "Contamination in the Paluxy Aquifer has been confirmed at one location..." Since the Paluxy Aquifer is a potable water source for the City of White Settlement, is the water in White Settlement safe to drink?

- A-7. The White Settlement Water Department monitors the White Settlement water supply periodically in conjunction with the EPA and Hargis & Associates. From what they tell us, the water is safe to drink. They are continuing to take all necessary steps to ensure clean, safe drinking water. For further information suggest you check with the White Settlement Water Department.
- Q-8. The Phase I Report says that, "The potential exists for surface-water migration of hazardous contaminants due to the proximity of identified sites to Meandering Road Creek and to Lake Worth." Assuming that dangerous contaminants are migrating into Lake Worth, how safe is the area's drinking water?
- A-8. To the best of our knowledge, the drinking water is safe. The Fort Worth Water Department has a water monitoring program and they should be able to answer any further questions on this subject.
- Q-9. Two of the sites requiring further study have received Hazardous Assessment Ratings in the high 80s. What do these rating scores mean?
- A-9. Landfill No. 1 received a score of 88 and Landfill No. 3 received a score of 86. The rationale for rating scores is provided in Appendix J of the report and is quite involved; however, these two sites received very high score under categories of "pathways" and "waste characteristics." The Pathways category is based on evidence of contaminant migration which has occurred in the past. The waste characteristics category is based on three factors: quantity, persistence, and physical state of waste.

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