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NAS FORT WORTH
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NEWSPAPER ARTICLE "REACTOR LEAKAGE REPORTED" NAS FORT WORTH TX
9/29/1984
FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM



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

**ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD
COVER SHEET**

AR File Number 13

9/29/84

13

Reactor leakage reported

File: 17A-53

D.R.

Study identifies old nuclear site

By BRUCE MILLAR,
Star-Telegram Writer

An undetermined amount of water from an abandoned nuclear reactor at Fort Worth's General Dynamics plant seeped into the ground in the 1950s and also may have been discharged into Lake Worth, a report released Friday said.

Air Force officials said the seepage from the previously unidentified hazardous waste site was quickly corrected when the leaks were discovered. Any soil that may have been contaminated was later removed, they said.

A recent review of monitoring done at the time and later nuclear safety inspections have confirmed that the possible discharge into Lake Worth has not raised radiation levels above safe limits, Air Force officials said. Lake Worth is a major

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Waste Site

identified

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in new study

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source of Fort Worth's drinking supply.

The findings were included in a six-month, \$50,000 study by CH2M Hill, a Gainesville, Fla., consulting firm. The report named 20 hazardous waste or spill sites at GD and said that all but the nuclear site should undergo further investigation and monitoring.

Air Force officials said Friday that no immediate threats to public health were identified. "We feel we have a pretty good grasp of the situation," Air Force Maj. Mike Madrid said at a press conference.

All but the former Nuclear Aerospace Research Facility have been identified in previous government or consulting firm studies. Although the consultants ranked it as the least hazardous site, saying it did not "present significant concern for adverse environmental effects," Air Force officials said they would conduct a field investigation.

The reactor operated at the General Dynamics site between 1953 and 1974 while researchers studied the effect of radiation on various metals as well as development of a nuclear-powered aircraft.

Normally, radioactive waste byproducts were carefully controlled, Air Force officials said. But they acknowledged that in the 1950s a small but undetermined amount of water exposed to radiation seeped into the ground from leaking water storage tanks.

The report said small quantities of slightly radioactive solutions may have been discharged into Lake Worth. Any high levels of contamination were reportedly kept on site.

Madrid said water in the nuclear facility area was tested weekly from 1954 to 1974. Other water sampling points within a 30-mile radius, including Lake Worth, were routinely monitored until 1974.

A review of the monitoring data showed that radioactivity levels at Lake Worth and other lakes were in general agreement and representative of expected background levels for the North Central Texas area, the report said.

Further nuclear safety inspections in 1975 and 1976 showed that the facility was within safe limits for radiation levels, Madrid said.

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