

N62604.AR.000258
NCBC GULFPORT
5090.3a

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE "EPA OKS INCINERATION OF SOIL AT SEABEE BASE" NCBC
GULFPORT MS
7/10/1986
SUN HERALD

HO FILE

To A/c
JWH

EPA OKs incineration of soil at Seabee base

Thursday July 10

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has paved the way for the incineration of 9,000 tons of dioxin-contaminated soil at the U.S. Naval Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport.

A Seabee Center spokeswoman said the incineration process will be able to start on schedule, later this month, since the EPA issued the temporary permit earlier this month.

Dioxin at the Gulfport base came from the Agent Orange that was stored there during the Vietnam War. Agent Orange, used as a herbicide during the Vietnam War, contains dioxin.

Dioxin has been linked to liver disorders, skin problems and other ailments. Servicemen exposed to the herbicide have also charged that it caused miscarriages and birth defects suffered by their wives and children.

A special team from the Air Force Emergency Services Center Laboratory, based at Tyndall Air Base in Panama City, Fla., will perform the soil cleanup with an experimental, portable incinerator at an estimated cost of \$5.4 million.

The portable incinerators will be used for the first time in the Seabee Center and are expected to cut the cost of the cleanup from \$3,000 a ton to \$350-\$600 a ton because it doesn't have to be transported.

The disposal project is expected to have nationwide ramifications because it radically reduces the cost of disposal, said EPA spokesman Carl Terry.

The process will be monitored by the Navy and two private laboratories, said Maj. Jim Heaberg, Air Force spokesman.

The actual incineration process is closed and the contaminants are vaporized by temperatures "several thousand degrees Fahrenheit." There is no danger to residents or wildlife, Heaberg said.

"What comes out of the stack is basically carbon dioxide and water. There are no traces of contaminants," Heaberg said.

Air Force officials say no dangerous levels of dioxin have been found in the area outside the Navy site.

About 850,000 gallons of Agent Orange were stored at the Seabee base from 1967 to 1977 before being incinerated at sea aboard the Dutch ship *Vulcanus*.