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NEWSPAPER ARTICLE "DIOXIN CLEANUP HAS BEEN EFFICIENT" NCBC GULFPORT MD  
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## Dioxin cleanup has been efficient

**T**he Air Force is moving toward completion in November of a \$16 million undertaking to decontaminate dioxin-tainted soil at the U.S. Naval Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport. It has been a carefully controlled, efficient operation.

For 10 months, a giant incinerator shipped in sections and assembled on the base has been engaged in purifying an estimated 24,000 tons of soil that held the last residue of leaking barrels of the liquid defoliant, Agent Orange.

Stored on base for use during the Vietnam conflict, the dangerous chemical — since linked to a variety of health problems — constituted a public health threat.

Some 840,000 gallons were removed in 1977 in barrels loaded aboard the incinerator ship Vulcanus and destroyed in a mid-Pacific burn.

The contaminated soil is the last residue to be handled in a carefully-mapped campaign to cleanse the earth rather than to remove it to a hazardous waste dump where it would continue to constitute a threat.

The incineration process is experimental and it is being closely monitored. The Air Force said there is no evidence of groundwater contamination and emissions have been within acceptable levels.

That's a comfort to both military and civilian personnel who live and work on or near the Navy base.

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