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NEWSPAPER ARTICLE "EPA: PLANT, BASE SPARED DUPONT, SEABEE SITE CLEAN IN
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EPA: Plant, Base Spared DuPont, Seabee site clean in Katrina report

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GULFPORT - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Friday said that two South Mississippi locations where residents are concerned about high levels of pollutants were not affected by Hurricane Katrina.

An EPA release said that DuPont's titanium dioxide plant in DeLisle and the contaminated former Agent Orange storage site at the Naval Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport did not spread pollutants during the storm.

"From a comparison with sampling conducted pre-hurricane Katrina, there is no clear and consistent pattern of increased contamination levels," the report said. "Based on these sampling results, EPA does not believe the (sites were) impacted by Hurricane Katrina."

At the DuPont plant, the EPA found no PCBs and low levels of metals, pesticides and volatile organic compounds.

The EPA took five samples at DuPont, three that analyzed soil and two from sediments washed up by Katrina. One of the sediment samples contained dioxin levels that were above those determined safe for industrial sites.

Five samples were also collected in the wetland area north of the Seabee Base. They were tested for dioxin, which was a byproduct of the Agent Orange that was stored on the base from 1968 to 1977.

Three of those samples held levels of the hazardous chemical above what has been deemed safe for residential areas.

The report said that levels detected in the area were around the same as those found in the soil before Katrina.