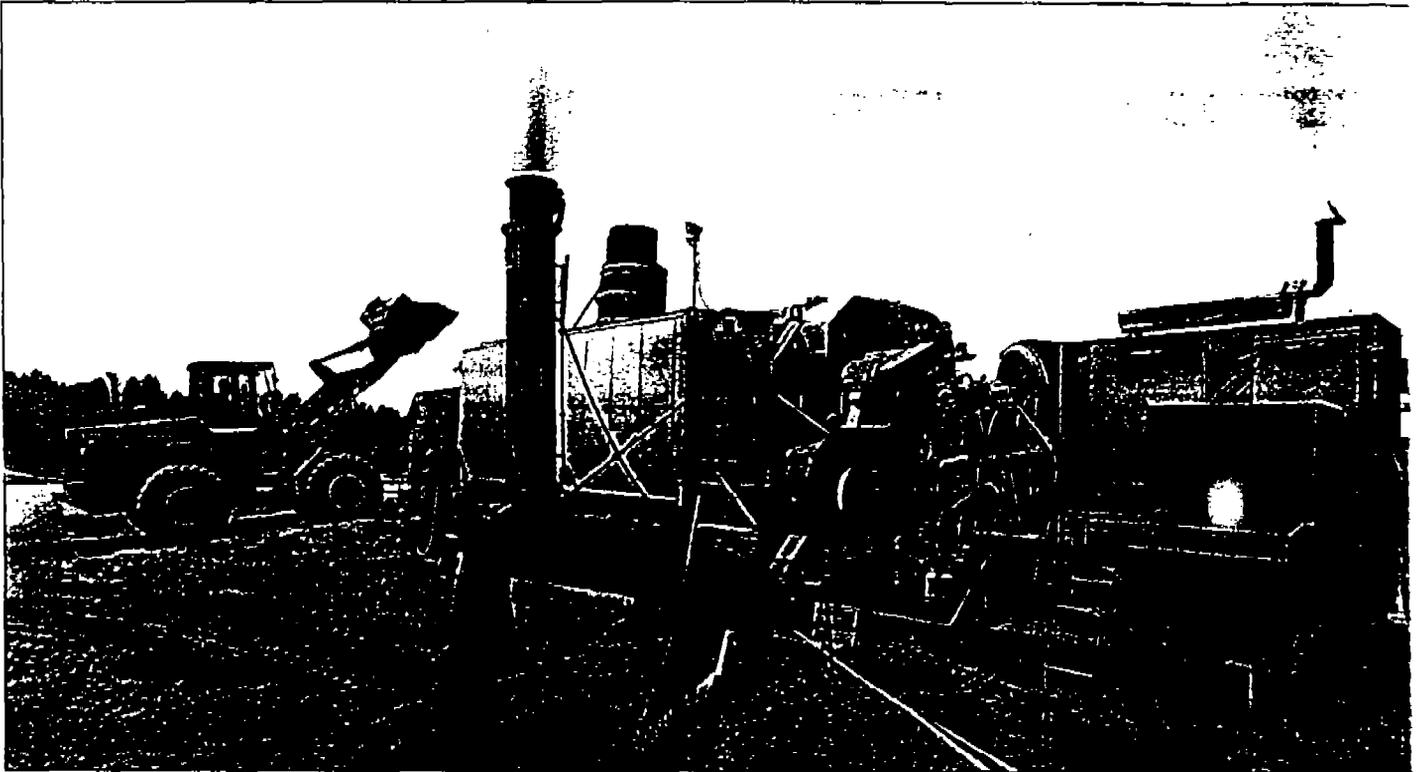


32212-000  
13.08.00.0033

# Environmental cleanup funds reduced



— Bob Self/star

A front-end loader dumps soil contaminated with jet fuel into a hopper that feeds into a furnace at Jacksonville Naval Air Station.

## Jacksonville's NAS hit hard

John Fritz  
Staff writer

A witch's cauldron of toxic waste polluting military bases in Jacksonville and across the country is continuing to brew because of cuts in the budget for environmental cleanup.

The new Republican Congress — the enemy in the eyes of many environmentalists — slashed \$300 million for cleanup work at bases this year and has proposed wiping out \$200 million next year.

"This represents the first line of an assault on cleaning up contamination," said Gawain Kripke, who follows environmental budget issues for Friends of the Earth.

"The military's spending overall is not declining nearly as fast as spending on military cleanup," Kripke said. "The issue is priorities. Many in the new Congress have decided that cleaning up contamination is not a priority."

The result of decades of environmental use, military bases nationwide are pol-

luted with PCBs, mercury, cadmium and other dangerous toxics. They can cause myriad health problems, from cancer to liver, kidney and brain damage.

This year's cuts stopped cleanup at some of the Defense Department's most polluted sites. Contamination at some might be 100 times greater than the legal standard, said Sherri Wasserman Goodman, the Pentagon's top official on environmental matters.

Bases in Jacksonville and South Georgia lost \$3.7 million from their fiscal 1995 cleanup funds.

Citizens should get involved and let their elected representatives know if they are concerned about what is happening, said Goodman, deputy undersecretary of defense for environmental security.

"It's their health, their environment and their communities that are at risk," Goodman said.

(See MILITARY, Page A-6)

### Environmental cuts

Cuts to the Department of Defense Environmental Restoration Account, the military's primary account to investigate and clean up toxic waste sites at active military bases, for fiscal year 1995 include:

| Where                          | DERA budget         | Amount eliminated |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Jacksonville Naval Air Station | \$14 million        | \$2.6 million     |
| Mayport Naval Station          | Approx. \$5 million | \$275,000         |
| Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base | N/A*                | \$800,000         |
| Nationwide                     | \$1.78 billion      | \$300 million     |

\* Kings Bay officials could not provide DERA budget.  
Note: Cecil Field was not affected by DERA cuts because money for its cleanup comes from a separate account set up for cleanup of bases slated for closure.  
Source: U.S. Navy

— Steve Nelson/star