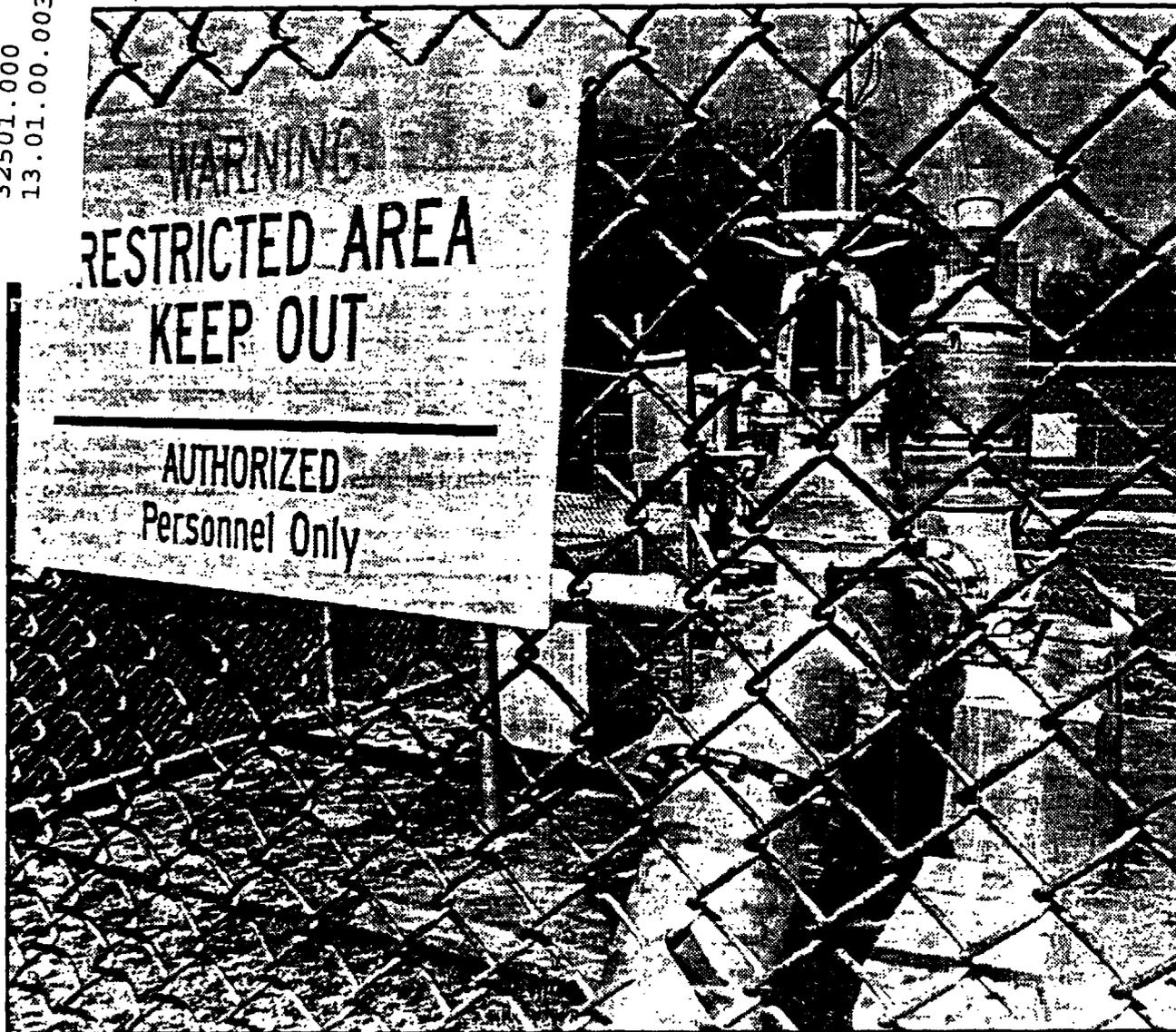


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Steve Mawyer/News Journal

This is one of two Pensacola Naval Air Station wells that have been shut down because of contamination by the pesticide dieldrin. Dieldrin was licensed for agricultural purposes until 1975 and to control termites until 1987.

# Navy wells polluted by pesticide

By Christopher Clausen  
News Journal

Two wells that supply water to Pensacola Naval Air Station, Corry Station and the Naval Hospital were shut down last month because they are contaminated with a pesticide suspected of causing cancer.

The Navy and the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation are trying to learn how the wells became contaminated with the pesticide dieldrin, said Harry White, a spokesman for Pensacola NAS.

"But its almost certain that its a non-Navy source. We haven't used dieldrin in years," White said.

Dieldrin and its chemical near-twin aldrin were licensed for use in agricultural purposes until 1975 and control termites until 1987, said George Larocca of the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

EPA lists dieldrin as a suspected carcinogen in amounts over 0.10 parts per billion while the Florida DER uses a standard of 0.05 parts per billion.

The wells are in the northeast corner of the facility which is near Warrington Road.

Public works officials noticed the contamination in February's routine sample of the wells, said Jim Hester, a spokesman for the Navy Public Works Center on the air station.

Tests in March showed levels of about .076 parts per billion, and the wells were shut down, Dewater said.

See CONTAMINATION, 2B

Date: Wednesday, 25 April 90

## Contamination closes wells

### FROM 1B

The level of the chemical throughout the system when the wells shut down reached as high as 0.11 parts per billion, White said.

The odds of getting cancer from drinking two quarts of water every day at that level over a 70-year life span would be 1 in 10,000, White said.

Sailors, other military personnel and civilian workers will be notified of the contamination through the Pensacola NAS and Corry Station weekly newspapers.

The Navy eventually will install activated charcoal filters to remove the chemical from the water as the wells are pumped in the future, Dewater said.

"It's expensive, and we don't know now when we will have them in place," Dewater said.

The Navy also is concerned that

the natural movement of the groundwater in the aquifer could move the chemical into NAS' other six wells, Dewater said. The water supply, the Navy said.

Dieldrin is still manufactured for use outside of the United States by Shell Chemical International, a subsidiary of Shell Oil Co. of Houston, Texas. The company voluntarily withdrew the chemical from the U.S. market in 1987 because of market competition and stiffer federal requirements.

The liquid chemical was sold only to farmers or professional exterminators and was typically injected just under the surface of the soil, Larocca said.

Because dieldrin is a synthetic organic chemical, it does not break down easily, according to "Hazardous Waste in America," published by the Sierra Club.