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Public invited to comment on waste cleanup

By Christopher Clausen
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The federal government wants to hear what residents think about how Pensacola Naval Air Station's 37 hazardous waste sites will be cleaned up.

The Environmental Protection Agency, the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation and the Navy have signed a letter of intent agreeing the air station's sites need to be cleaned up.

The three-party agreement establishes a framework and schedule for the investigation and rehabilitation of past hazardous waste disposal sites.

"It's a procedural document," said Harry White, a spokesman for the air station. "For example, if we can't agree on how something should be cleaned up, it has a section on resolution of conflict."

The agreement, issued under the authority of both federal and state law, will become effective in 45 days after the public has had an opportunity to make comments, White said.

Copies of the agreement will be filed at the West Florida Regional Library, 220 W. Gregory St., the John Pace Library on the campus of the University of West Florida and the air station library.

Written comments on the agreements may be mailed to:

Environmental Protection Agency, Waste Management Division, Attention: Federal Facility Project Manager, 345 Courtland St. N.E., Atlanta, Ga. 30365.

If necessary, the agreement may be modified based on the comments, White said.