

'Six Escambia sites on priority list for toxic cleanup

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By Sara Lamb
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One contaminated groundwater sample eventually may lead to a federal cleanup but it takes time.

The Environmental Protection Agency set up a Superfund program in 1980 and began a lengthy process of categorizing America's worst parcels of toxic land. Six of the following sites have been declared National Priority List sites. A seventh site is expected to be added to the list soon.

The list identifies sites nationwide that present a long-term threat to the environment. Hazards are often identified before sites are put on the list, as is the case with Escambia Wood Treating Co. on North Palafox Street. Emergency cleanup may be done on sites to take care of immediate threats before long-term cleanup begins.

There are no such sites in Santa Rosa County. Escambia's tally of seven includes:

Site: Beulah Landfill

Location: Jamesville Road, north of Interstate 10

When declared a Superfund site: 1990

Suspected contaminants: Groundwater sample detected pesticides, copper, zinc and a type of PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl).

Cleanup status: Additional water, air and soil sampling began in April. Results from those samples are expected in about two months. Sample results will help the EPA determine a cleanup method. EPA officials don't expect cleanup to begin before 1994 or 1995.

Site: Dubose Oil

Location: Two miles west of Cantonment off county Highway 97

When declared a Superfund site: 1986

Suspected contaminants: Surface soil and groundwater are believed to be contaminated with various waste oils, solvent sludges, heavy metals and industrial debris. First sample indicating possible toxins at the site was taken in 1982.

Cleanup status: The design for the cleanup is expected to be completed in January. EPA officials said in 1984 and 1985, 38,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil were excavated and placed in a vault on the site. Construction of a treatment method for the soil and contaminated groundwater is not expected until mid-1995, EPA officials add.

Site: Pioneer Sand Co.

Location: Quarry near Sausley Field, off Sausley Field Road

When declared a Superfund site: 1983

Suspected contaminants: Hazardous metals and chemicals found in sludges on site. Studies determined that no area wells had been contaminated.

Cleanup status: Cleanup completed in July 1991. The EPA expects to remove the site from the National Priority List this year. Rei-hold Chemical has agreed to maintain the site for the next 30 years. Sludges were mixed with cement and capped. A leachate collection system also was installed. Leachate is the term used for moisture that leaks off of a contaminated site, threatening groundwater.

Site: Pensacola Naval Air Station

Location: Several sites on the base located southwest of downtown Pensacola.

When declared a Superfund site: 1989

Suspected contaminants: A variety of hazardous waste including industrial sludge,

paint waste, cleaning solutions, acids, caustics, degreasers, heavy metals, fuels.

Cleanup status: Officials are looking at 37 sites on base. Federal and state officials are still in the process of evaluating the site to determine what contaminants are there. Underground tanks have been removed, and the sites have been posted.

Site: Escambia Wood Treating Co.

Location: 3910 N. Palafox St.

When declared a Superfund site: The EPA determined the hazardous materials had contaminated the groundwater and soil in 1991. The site has not yet been placed on the EPA's National Priority List for

long-term cleanup, but EPA officials say it will be proposed for the list.

Suspected contaminants: Wood-treating compounds, pentachlorophenol (PCP), dioxin, creosote, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

Cleanup status: The EPA classified the site as a Superfund removal site but already has reached the \$2 million limit allotted for Cleanup on each site. Listing on the National Priority List could make more money available. More than 140,000 cubic yards of soil have been excavated and remain on site until a treatment method is chosen. Air monitoring continues on site. A chronic health study of area residents is likely, EPA officials said.

Site: Agrico Chemical

Location: Fairfield Drive near Interstate-110

When declared a Superfund site: 1989

Suspected contaminants: An EPA study of well water near the site found high levels of fluoride, sodium, calcium, nitrate, lime ammonia and potassium.

Cleanup status: The EPA hopes to propose a cleanup remedy for the site by September and begin groundwater and soil cleanup within the next three years.

Site: American Creosote Works

Location: Pine and J streets

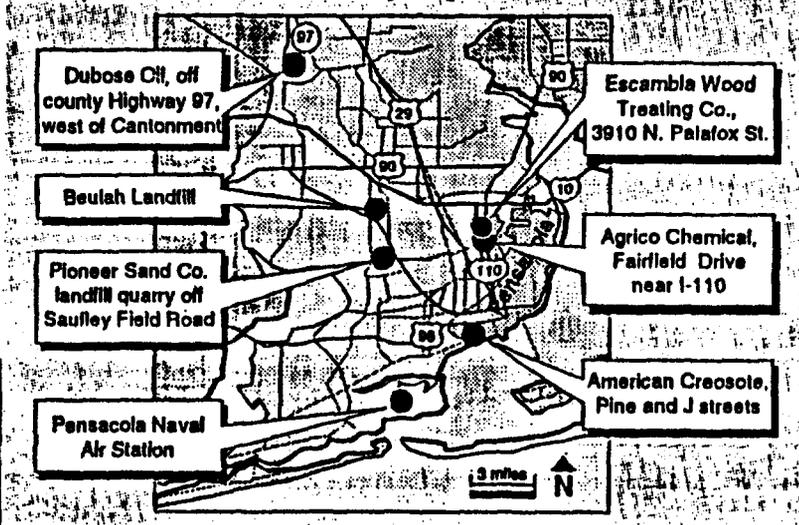
When declared a Superfund site: 1983

Suspected contaminants: Sludge, soil and groundwater contaminated with creosote and pentachlorophenol.

Cleanup status: Some contaminated soil has been removed and the area has been fenced. The EPA is in the process of designing a method to treat both the soil and groundwater on site. Cleanup is expected to begin next year.

SUPERFUND SITES

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has identified seven places in Escambia County as Superfund sites. Congress established the fund in 1980 to help clean up areas contaminated by hazardous materials. Pioneer Sand is the only site in Escambia County in which cleanup has been completed. Full-scale cleanup on the other six sites has not yet begun.



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