

N60508.AR.000523
NAS WHITING FIELD
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FACT SHEET NUMBER 1 ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS NAS WHITING FIELD FL
5/1/1989
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ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS AT NAS WHITING FIELD

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PURPOSE OF INVESTIGATIONS

The Department of the Navy is conducting a Remedial Investigation (RI) and Feasibility Study (FS) of 18 former waste disposal sites at NAS Whiting Field. During an RI/FS, conditions at the sites are studied, the problems, if any, are defined, and alternative methods of cleaning up the areas are evaluated.

SITE BACKGROUND

Whiting Field, due to the very nature of its primary mission, has long been engaged in a wide variety of operations - many of which involved the use, handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials. Current improvements in technology and today's more complete understanding of the long-term effects of these materials has prompted the Navy to investigate sites where the potential for environmental contamination exists.

Currently, NAS Whiting Field is not one of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPAs) National Priority List (NPL) or "Superfund" sites. However, all site investigations are being conducted in accordance with EPA and Florida guidelines.

SUSPECTED CONTAMINANTS

The suspected sources of contamination at the Whiting Field sites are paints, solvents, degreasers, waste oils, and leaded fuel. These materials came into contact with the environment through: Leaks in storage tanks and piping; spills which occurred during fueling and defueling operations; burning of waste liquids during fire fighter training exercises; disposal of waste products in landfills, pits, and ditches; and burial of sludges removed during tank cleaning operations.

PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS

Two phases of investigative studies at NAS Whiting Field have already been completed. The Preliminary Assessment identified 18 potential sites, and the Site Inspection collected preliminary field data on the sites. Both studies supplied essential information to the RI/FS planning process. Sampling of on-base supply wells, conducted during the Site Inspection, revealed that two of the three active wells contained small amounts of solvent and fuel related compounds. Two compounds were found at levels above the drinking water standards, or Maximum Concentration Levels (MCL), set by the state. Installation of a filter system has returned water quality at one well to within MCL standards; a filter system for the second well is in the design stage. One of the goals of the RI/FS at Whiting Field is to identify and cleanup the source areas which are contributing contaminants to these wells.

CURRENT STUDY

During upcoming RI program, environmental samples will be taken to characterize site conditions. The groundwater, surface water, surface sediment, and soil samples will be analyzed and compiled in a database which will be used to evaluate cleanup (remedial) alternatives during the FS. These activities will be directed, on behalf of NAS Whiting Field, by the Southern Division of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command. An environmental engineering firm, E.C. Jordan, has been contracted to perform the RI/FS.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A community relations plan (CRP) will be developed and followed throughout the environmental response activities at NAS Whiting Field. In order to ensure that the needs and concerns of the Santa Rosa County community are addressed by the CRP, interviews with local officials and citizens will be conducted. The CRP will identify activities to keep the community informed of project activity and progress as well as describe opportunities for community involvement in the decision making process. A Technical Review Committee (TRC) was recently formed at NAS Whiting Field and is an example of the type of activity which will involve representatives of the Santa Rosa County community in the RI/FS process. Details of the CRP and other project information are available for public review at the Information Repository from the Public Affairs Office at NAS Whiting Field.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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