



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
NAVAL ORDNANCE STATION  
INDIAN HEAD, MARYLAND 20640

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NSWC INDIAN HEAD  
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IN REPLY REFER TO

5090  
Ser 04C/100  
20 NOV 1985

The Honorable James C. Simpson  
Maryland Senate  
Post Office Box 888  
Waldorf, MD 20601

Dear Senator Simpson:

I hope you can meet with me and other local officials at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 4, 1985 at the Headquarters Building (Building Number 20) of the Naval Ordnance Station. I want you to know of our findings on environmental contamination at the Naval Ordnance Station. The latest findings have been published in a "Confirmation Study" which was mailed to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III and to the Maryland Waste Management Administration on November 19, 1985. In addition, an "Initial Assessment Study" was mailed to the EPA and the State on July 20, 1984. These reports are significant because of the current emphasis on the environment in the Chesapeake Bay Area. The reports were prepared as part of the Department of Defense's Installation Restoration Program to identify and correct environmental deficiencies resulting from past practices. Our current practices are, of course, controlled by appropriate permits issued by State and Federal regulatory agencies.

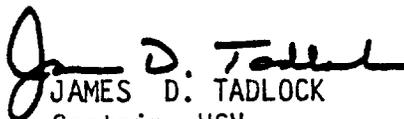
I am inviting you and other officials in order that you may know of the effort by this activity to do our part to maintain the environmental quality in Charles County, Maryland. At the same time, I want to avoid any sensationalism which might be precipitated by a report of contamination without consideration being given to the degree of environmental hazard or the actions which are being taken to minimize any such hazard. I am also inviting local press representatives to this meeting.

Briefly summarized, this report discusses the consulting engineer's findings at the three environmentally suspect locations within the Naval Ordnance Station. For the most severely impacted location, the report states there are approximately 488 pounds of mercury in the sediment deposited in a 10-acre low-lying area of the Station. This mercury was released over a 30-year period from the chemical analysis laboratory at our Biazzi nitration facility. (We have taken action to eliminate the possibility of any future discharges of mercury.) The report evaluates the environmental hazard and possible remedial actions, including removal of the mercury from the entire 10-acre site. The report concludes there is no current threat to human health and the environment and recommends reducing the potential risk by removing mercury from a small area of less than one-tenth of an acre, which is adjacent to the point where the mercury was released and which has the highest recorded concentration of mercury. The report also recommends monitoring of the stormwater runoff from the entire area to insure the problem is confined inside the station boundary. There is a substantially lesser degree of hazard for the other two locations which are included in this report; thus no remedial action is recommended for these sites.

Navy environmental specialists will consider comments from the EPA and the Maryland Waste Management Administration in implementing the recommended remedial actions for this area.

I would appreciate your referring all inquiries on this matter to the Naval Ordnance Station. Press inquiries should be addressed to Mr. Michael Ward, Public Affairs Officer, at telephone (301) 743-4627. Other inquiries should be addressed to Mr. Jerry Volman, the senior staff officer coordinating the environmental program at this activity. Mr. Volman may be reached at telephone (301) 743-4485.

Sincerely,

  
JAMES D. TADLOCK  
Captain, USN  
Commanding Officer