



Former Frankford Arsenal Area II Soils

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Introduction

The former Frankford Arsenal consists of 109 acres located at 5601 Tacony Street in Philadelphia. The property currently has four owners: Arsenal Business Associates, a limited partnership, the Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation, Dietz and Watson, and PIDC (Philadelphia's public-private economic development corporation). The site has been divided into four active projects to improve efficiency for the clean-up efforts (Area 1, Area 2, Area 3 and Groundwater). Since 1996, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has performed several investigations for munitions and residual chemicals.



Work at the arsenal included the manufacturing of small arms and ammunition.

Site History

Operation as an arsenal began in 1816. During that time, a wide variety of ordnance-related activities took place over the years, including the development of artillery and infantry equipment, proving and testing of musket and rifle powder, development and manufacturing of small arms and ammunition, and many other research and development initiatives. In 1976, Frankford Arsenal was declared excess and was closed on Sept. 30, 1977. A decontamination and clean-up program was completed in 1980. The work included remediation of radiological contamination, explosive residues, and heavy metal residues.

Department of Defense Environmental Cleanup

The Corps of Engineers is conducting the work using the processes under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), which was enacted by Congress in 1980. This law provides broad federal authority to respond directly to releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances that may endanger public health or the environment.

Area II Soils

The draft final Area II Soil Remedial Investigation Report was finalized in December 2014 and identifies a few sites that will require a Feasibility Study. The purpose of the Remedial Investigation is to collect data to determine the nature and extent of contamination and to assess risk to human health and the environment. When unacceptable risks are identified in the Remedial Investigation, a Feasibility Study is completed which develops, screens, and evaluates alternatives for addressing the risk identified in the Remedial Investigation.



Several investigation methods are used during the Remedial Investigation, including geophysical surveys, which is pictured here.

Findings in the Area II Remedial Investigation Report

Area II was divided into three zones associated with past historical use in order to assess past DoD use to include: Zone 1 – a mostly residential area which occupies the northwest corner of Area II; Zone 2 – a mostly industrial use area located in the northeast corner of Area II which housed research and support operations; and Zone 3 – a mostly industrial use area which housed former ammunition production operations in the southern portion of Area II adjacent to Frankford Creek. Crews collected a total of 445 soil samples in all three zones.



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There were several chemicals of concern (COCs) identified in the soil, including lead, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and benzo(a)pyrene. A human health risk assessment was completed for each zone to determine if there was an unacceptable risk to current and potential future receptors at the site. Based on the results of the risk assessment for each zone, **there was no unacceptable risk to current workers and school students at the site.** There was unacceptable risk identified for potential future residents at the site, and six Areas of Concern (AOCs) were identified as requiring additional actions to address risks to potential future residents. Remedial alternatives for these six AOCs will be evaluated in the Feasibility Study, which is expected to be completed in winter 2016. The attached figure shows the locations of the six AOCs within Area II.

The Corps of Engineers anticipates releasing the Area II Proposed Plan for public comment in winter 2016 and plans to start any necessary clean-up work in 2016. The Corps of Engineers is committed to a complete and thorough cleanup at the former Frankford Arsenal

Status of the Other Areas

Several investigations and removal actions have taken place at Area 1 since 1999. After completion of these removals, the Corps of Engineers determined that there are no remaining unacceptable risks to human health or the environment, and recommends no further action for Area 1 Soils. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection approved the Remedial Investigation Report, which summarized these findings. The Final No Further Action Decision Document for Area I Soils was signed on 1 July 2015.

The Area III Soil Remedial Investigation field effort was completed in fall 2014, and the report is expected to be final by December 2015. The Groundwater Remedial Investigation Report is expected to be finalized in 2016.

Administrative Record File

The Corps of Engineers has made a file of the existing technical documents and additional project materials available for public review. Additional documents will be added to the file as work progresses. Some of the documents also can be found on the project's website: www.nab.usace.army.mil/Frankford

The Administrative Record file is available for review during normal business hours at the Tacony Branch Library, located at 6742 Torresdale Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19135. The library's phone number is (215) 685-8755.

For More Information: If you have questions, please contact the Baltimore District Corporate Communication Office at cenab-cc@usace.army.mil or 410-962-2809.



Crews remove one of buildings in Area 1 as part of the clean-up work.