



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Baltimore District

The Corps'pondent

a newsletter by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the residents of Spring Valley

March 2001

Corps presents soil sampling proposal at meeting

by Maj. Brian Plaisted
Spring Valley Operations Officer

At the Spring Valley community meeting on Mar. 14, the Corps of Engineers, Environmental Protection Agency and D.C. Department of Health presented a comprehensive soil sampling proposal that calls for the testing of every property within the Spring Valley formerly used defense site area. This effort involves collecting samples and testing the soil for arsenic at approximately 1,200 properties. The Corps, EPA and D.C. Health developed this sampling proposal following questions and concerns raised by several residents about the Corps' current sampling efforts in the neighborhood.

In response, the Corps, EPA and D.C. Health officials met to discuss ways to expand the Corps' ongoing sampling. Following these discussions and a meeting with several Spring Valley residents, the comprehensive sampling proposal was presented at the Mar. 14 meeting.

A map showing the areas to be sampled is presented on the back of this page.

Sampling proposal

Under this sampling proposal every property or lot within the project site will have two six-part composite samples taken from the surface soil. The depth of these samples will be from 0 to 6 inches. Each lot will be divided in

half and soil will be taken from six randomly selected spots in each half. These places can be adjusted based on input from the property owner. The soil taken from each half will be composited together and those two samples will be analyzed for arsenic.

In addition, 15 percent of the properties or lots will be randomly selected for subsurface sampling. This sampling will consist of one boring to a depth of 6 to 10 feet, depending on the cut or fill in the area, with samples taken every foot and analyzed for arsenic.

Central testing area

Additional soil sampling is proposed for an area called the central testing area. This area comprises the region of the Spring Valley neighborhood where World War I field-testing is believed to have occurred according to aerial and ground photographs, testing reports and other historical documents. Every property or lot in this area will have two additional six-part, composite, surface samples taken, for a total of four. Also, these properties or lots will have subsurface samples taken and analyzed for arsenic.

Sampling other chemicals

The Army, EPA and D.C. Health are reviewing historical documentation, aerial and ground photographs of the

neighborhood, and the list of chemicals used by the Army at the Spring Valley site during World War I to determine if sampling needs to be done for any other potential contaminants.

Following this review, if sampling is recommended, it would focus on those locations identified in the historical documentation and on the select group of chemicals likely to have been used. This sampling would be conducted in conjunction with the arsenic sampling.

Public comment period

Prior to beginning the sampling, the public may comment on the proposal. Individuals wishing to comment on the sampling proposal should send written comments to the Corps by April 16, 2001.

Comments should be mailed to **Baltimore District Corps of Engineers, Attn: Public Affairs Office, P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, Maryland 21203-1715.**

You can also e-mail comments to **Theodore.J.Henry@nab02.usace.army.mil.**

The sampling proposal will also be presented to the Spring Valley Scientific Advisory Panel that was recently established by D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams to review all scientific data related to the Spring Valley site.

After receiving the panel's input and feedback from the community, the sampling plan



Department of the Army
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 Baltimore District
 P.O. Box 1715
 Baltimore, MD 21203-1715

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will be written. Soil sampling will begin in the central testing area and then proceed to other areas of the neighborhood.

Allowing time for access agreements and other administrative matters, soil sampling could begin in mid-May 2001 and take approximately eight months. Several teams of experts will move from area to area collecting samples. There will be some flexibility in scheduling to

adjust for special circumstances.

Those properties or lots that have any composite sample result above 13 parts per million will have additional samples taken over the entire property.

If subsurface arsenic results are elevated, additional subsurface samples will be taken in that area. The same is true for other contaminants. If elevated levels are found, then more samples would be taken.

To view materials presented at the Mar. 14 community meeting please check our website at <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm>.

If you have questions about the sampling proposal or other Corps activities in the Spring Valley area, please call the project information line at 1-800-434-0988 and leave a message. Or you may call the Corps' Public Affairs Office at 410-962-2809.

