

Fact Sheet
July 19, 2001
Vapor Containment Structure Upgrade at 4825 Glenbrook Road

The intrusive investigation of the burial pit at 4825 Glenbrook Rd was temporarily halted this morning while we upgrade the protective measures to account for buried ordnance. This equates to a 2 to 4 week break in work at the site.

In the last week, workers have expanded the burial pit excavation into the adjacent property, where between 1999 and 2000, 288 ordnance-related items were safely removed.

The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide the background and rationale for the upgrade.

History:

- EPA and DC Health requested an intrusive investigation to find the chemical burial site depicted in one historical photograph. Historical evidence didn't indicate the presence of ordnance in the burial site that was the target of this investigation. The presence of an adjacent sewer line and retaining wall masked the signature of ordnance items buried there.
- Site Safety Submission approved with a Maximum Credible Event (MCE) based on the evaporative release of lewisite from a 5-gallon ceramic container. Assumed workers would be able to stop the release 5 minutes after detection.
- Use of a lightweight vapor containment structure (VCS), approved by the US Army Technical Center for Environmental Safety and DA Safety, was preferred to facilitate its repositioning while investigating the entire back yard of the property.
- Tent VCS is not certified to prevent a release of chemical agent in the event of an accidental detonation.

Rationale for upgrade:

- 31 May 2001, we excavated one 75-mm mortar from the site. This round was considered an anomaly, as the evidence did not suggest this was an ordnance burial site.
- 26 June 2001, we excavated six 75-mm mortar rounds from the same pit. Our extensive investigation of this small area led us to believe all rounds were removed and the site still should not be considered an ordnance burial site.
- 29 June 2001, we received preliminary results indicating that some of the bottles excavated from the site contained mustard and lewisite.
- 17 July 2001, we found three ordnance rounds in a pit we began digging immediately adjacent to the original pit. This find indicated that the first pit had not removed all the ordnance from the site. This led to the conclusion that this is a likely an ordnance burial site.
- 18 July 2001, Corps ordnance experts from Huntsville District recommended that we upgrade the VCS to a metal structure certified to prevent the release of chemical agent in the event of an accidental detonation. COL Spear concurred.
- Huntsville experts contacted MAJ Peloquin, Baltimore District DDE for Spring Valley, who concurred, authorized the work stoppage, and began the notification process.