



# U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS BALTIMORE DISTRICT

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Digging activities resume at Spring Valley's Pit 3**

**BALTIMORE** — Tomorrow, Jan. 24, the Baltimore District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will resume activities to continue the removal of World War I munitions at Spring Valley's Pit 3 located in the 4800 block of Glenbrook Road, which is anticipated to continue until the late Spring timeframe.

The pause in removal activities began Dec. 5, when the Baltimore District was advised by the Materiel Assessment Review Board (MARB) that a munition recovered in November may contain an explosive burster charge, which per the USACE's safety plan required further analysis before digging could continue. It is important to note that although this munition is suspected to contain a burster, it lacks the fuze needed for the burster to function.

“World War I munitions of this type require a two-part detonation system to function: a fuze and a burster charge, but the presence of just one part can classify a munition as ‘explosively configured’ even though the threat of explosion is extremely low,” said Dan Noble, project manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District.

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After the MARB results determined that the munition of concern is an explosively configured 75 mm chemical projectile with an arsine fill, the Corps submitted a Chemical Safety Submission amendment to the Department of Defense Explosive Safety Board. The board approved the amendment on January 18. The amendment requires the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to place an air filtration unit on the Interim Holding Facility. This additional protective measure is now in place.

“Maintaining the highest standards of continuous safety for the Spring Valley community, from munitions recovery, to storage and disposal remains our first priority,” said Colonel Peter W. Mueller, commander, USACE Baltimore District.

The munition item analyzed was removed from the Glenbrook Road neighborhood site in November, and remains safely stored on Federal property.

During the World War I era, the U.S. Army developed and tested chemical weapons on a rural tract then known as the American University Experiment Station. The northwestern Washington, D.C., neighborhood was later developed and became known as Spring Valley. Pit 3, one component of the investigation and cleanup of the Spring Valley Formerly Used Defense Site, is located on the 4800 block of Glenbrook Road.

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<http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm>