



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

April 2004

Shelter-in-Place to be introduced for Lot 18

By Mary Beth Thompson
Public Affairs Office

Before excavation resumes at Lot 18, occupants of a handful of residences will be taught Shelter-In-Place techniques. Shelter-in-Place will also be discussed at the **next community-wide meeting**, scheduled for **April 19**.

"Shelter-in-Place is a safety measure commonly used across the country," said project manager Craig Georg. "The safeguards that will be in place for this dig are far more than adequate to protect the public from an accidental spill of chemical agent. Shelter-in-Place is being added to the other safeguards to go the extra mile to provide an additional layer of protection for the public."

"The safety of the community and our workers is our number one priority," said Gary Schilling, program manager.

Lot 18 is located between a line of several buildings along the southwestern border of the American University campus and a corresponding line of residential properties along Rockwood Parkway.

Redundant engineering safety controls will be in place during the dig. These controls would have to fail at the same time for there to be an accidental release of chemical beyond the engineering controls. The likelihood of their collective failure is remote.

However, if a chemical release beyond the engineering controls should occur, Shelter-in-Place will be initiated.

People in the affected area will hear a siren and receive a message via an emergency ring-down system. The message may arrive by telephone, email or both.

People in the affected area should remain indoors. They should immediately shut off heat and air conditioners, make sure

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A photo captures the American University Experiment Station as it looked during World War I. U.S. Army photo

Shelter-In-Place Guidelines

- If the siren goes off in your neighborhood or you receive a call through the emergency ring-down system during an environmental investigation, go inside immediately.
- Shut off heat and air conditioning.
- Close fireplace dampers, windows, doors, vents and any openings to the outside.
- Have an emergency plan, such as a checklist with phone numbers for your doctor and family members. Keep phone lines open. Do not call 911 for information.
- Be prepared to stay indoors for an extended period of time; it could be as long as a few hours but should not be longer. Have supplies, water, any necessary medications, a radio and flashlight available.
- Stay indoors until an all-clear signal is issued.

Shelter-In-Place *continued from p. one*

fireplace dampers are closed, and shut all doors, windows, vents, clothes dryer, ceiling fans and other openings to the outside.

They should go to and stay in a room, preferably without windows, on the highest level that has access to a telephone, radio or TV, water, and a toilet.

They should not leave unless asked to do so by local fire or police officials. When the

emergency is over, an all-clear signal will be announced.

These precautions help minimize exposure until the release dissipates.

The homes and buildings that are potentially affected by the Lot 18 dig have been identified, and the residents and university officials received letters in January. The Corps' community outreach team is meeting with residents to preview and discuss the plans.



A tent with engineering controls, similar to this one, will be used during the Lot 18 dig to protect workers and the public. In the unlikely event of an accidental chemical release that escapes the structure and the engineering controls, Shelter-In-Place will be used.

U.S. Army photo

Sevenson gets contract to remove arsenic-affected soil

*By Mary Beth Thompson
Public Affairs Office*

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, awarded a contract to Sevenson Environmental Services to remove soil with elevated levels of arsenic from 24 properties in Spring Valley.

To date, the Corps has collected about 3,500 soil samples

from 1,484 of the 1,602 properties and lots within the Spring Valley site. Sample grids above the cleanup level of 20 parts per million were identified on 139 residential properties. Soil removal and backfilling has been addressed on 26 of the 139 properties and lots since July 2002.

Work on the next 24 properties is expected to begin by the

end of May and should take 12 to 18 months, according to Ed Hughes, Spring Valley project manager for hazardous and toxic waste cleanup.

"The remaining 89 properties have lower arsenic levels," Hughes said. "Our plan is that these properties will be addressed starting in July 2005. We target completion by September 2007."

Residents of the 113 properties awaiting soil removal were sent a letter outlining the progress of the project and the prioritization of their properties. The letter explained that the Corps, the Environmental Protection Agency and the D.C. Department of Health determined the order in which the work would be performed.

"Properties with the highest remaining arsenic levels were given first priority, with consideration also given to our ongoing ordnance investigation and our desire to disturb a property only once, thereby minimizing impacts to the daily lives of members of the household," Hughes wrote.



Soil is removed from a Spring Valley residential lot that tested above 20 parts per million.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo

Final preparations nearly complete for Lot 18

By Christopher Augsburger
Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed drafts of the project-wide Public Protection Plan, or PPP, and the Lot 18 Public Outreach Plan, or POP, in preparation for the resumption of the Lot 18 dig, which is scheduled to begin in late May.

In March, these documents were circulated to project partners, the Environmental Protection Agency and the D.C. Department of Health, and submitted to the Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board for comment.

While the partners reviewed the PPP and POP, the Corps' project team began the final stages of developing the Lot 18 specific work plan, called Annex F, and the Lot 18 specific PPP. The Corps has also distributed those documents to the partners for comment.

Lot 18 work plan available for review, comment

The community will have an opportunity to review and comment on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' draft final work plan for the upcoming Lot 18 dig from April 14 through May 5.

A copy of the Lot 18 draft final work plan is kept at the Palisades Library. Individual copies can be obtained by calling the toll-free Spring Valley Information Line at 800-434-0988. Written comments may be sent by email to Mary.B.Thompson@usace.army.mil or by fax to 410-962-3660.

The Lot 18 draft final work

plan includes details on additional site and worker safeguards that will be put in place, along with additional measures for public safety.

The team anticipates it will unearth debris, municipal trash and glassware, according to project manager Craig Georg. However, he said, that while they do not expect to uncover an explosively configured chemical round, there is a possibility of finding lewisite in laboratory glassware again. A small quantity of lewisite was found last year at this site.

This possibility has caused the Corps to categorize this investigation as a "high-probability" investigation and take additional precautions during the dig.

The excavation will be conducted using a variety of safeguards, which include conducting the dig within a special tent that acts as an engineering control structure. This special tent

plan is currently under review by the Environmental Protection Agency, the D.C. Department of Health, the property owner and will be presented to the Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board April 13.

Although the Corps is not required to make this work plan available for public review by law, the Corps' project team is making this draft final document available to remain open and inclusive of the community during this important project.

A summary of concerns will be presented and addressed at the May 11 RAB meeting.

incorporates air filters, air monitors and negative pressurization within the structure. Therefore, in the unexpected event of an accidental release of a chemical agent, the multiple layers of safeguards can work to minimize or eliminate impact to anyone's safety. The redundant safety precautions, such as the multiple layers of air filtration systems, increase the safety of the operation, so that should one system fail, another is there to protect the community.

With the protections the Corps has planned, the team believes the possibility of a chemical release that could affect the neighborhood is extremely remote, Georg said.

As an additional safety measure, the nearby occupants of neighborhood buildings will be taught Shelter-in-Place techniques, which are designed to minimize their exposure to an accidental release.

Public meeting

A community-wide Spring Valley FUDS meeting will be held **Monday, April 19 at 7 p.m.** at the **Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church, 3401 Nebraska Avenue NW.**

Attendees will hear a project update on the Spring Valley FUDS investigations, with special attention on the upcoming Lot 18 dig. Technical experts will present information and answer questions.

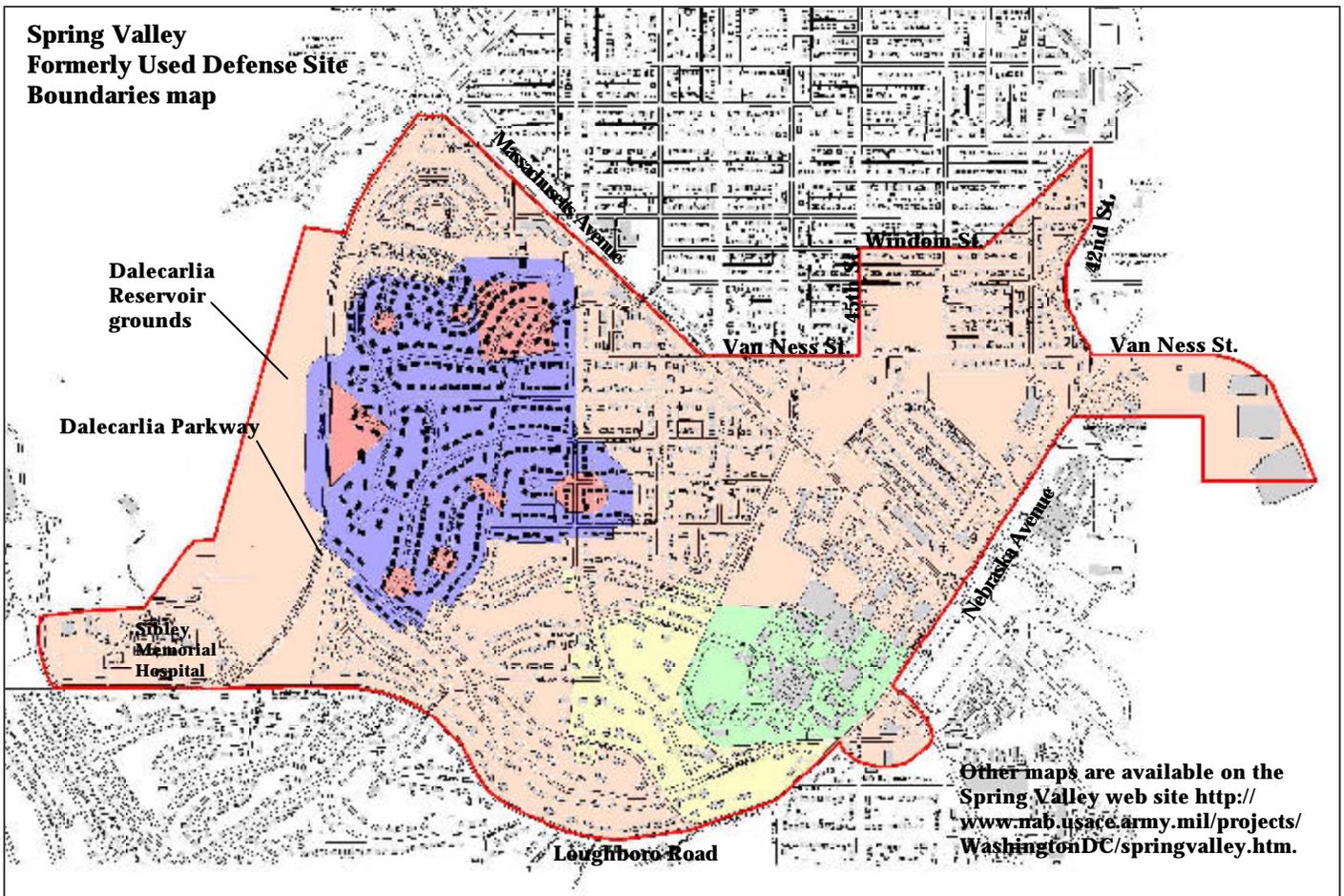


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