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of Engineers
Baltimore District

The Corps' pondent

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

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by Maj. Brian Plaisted
Spring Valley Operations
Officer

Since my last newsletter to you in June we have continued to recover numerous items from the excavation.

To date, we have removed 301 items from the 13 by 23-foot, 10-foot deep pit. These include 185 ordnance items, 30 cylinders, 17 glass containers, 12 metal drums, 20 wooden training aids and 37 other miscellaneous items. Of those recovered, 246 have been determined to be scrap. The remaining 55 items are being analyzed and evaluated for disposal.

Leaking drum

We experienced an unexpected event at the Glenbrook Road work-site on June 21.

That afternoon, about 4 p.m., the workers inside the Vapor Containment Structure were removing a drum that had contained a liquid which apparently had seeped into the soil, resulting in the release of vapors.

After a preliminary identification indicated no mustard or Lewisite was present, an analysis

of the air samples collected indicated that the vapors were from industrial chemicals and solvents. A list of these compounds is provided on our website, <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/environmental/springvalley.htm>, under the July 8 update.

The excavation site was shut down immediately after the detection of the gasses, and the release into the atmosphere was determined to be most likely well below the permissible exposure limit. There was no danger to the public. The pit was covered with a plastic tarp for safety precautions.

Filter system ok

On June 24, personnel from Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., conducted tests on the filter system. The results indicated the carbon filters were functioning properly, but the airflow rate could be reduced to further improve filter efficiency.

On June 25 air samples were collected under the plastic tarp in the Vapor Containment Structure. The results indicated very low levels of six chemical vapors remained. Our contractor, Parsons Engi-

neering Services, has prepared a plan to monitor for these industrial-type chemical vapors. That plan is currently under review within the Army and by the EPA and D.C. Health.

Final testing of the filter system was conducted on June 30 and all portions of the testing were successful.

Soil sample analysis detected the same compounds that were found in the initial air samples plus several additional compounds and trace amounts of 10 other compounds.

We will remain shut down until the review of the monitoring plan is completed.

Moving the VCS

During this period the Vapor Containment Structure will be repositioned over the first anomaly in preparation for future excavation work. We plan to resume our work July 19.

During the shutdown time, our workers have also cleared surface debris from a small disposal area on American University property, which is in close proximity to the Glenbrook

Road site. The area is approximately 23 feet wide by 12 feet long, and contained unidentifiable metal scrap, car battery parts, lab bottles, test tubes, reactor tubes and other pieces of glass.

All debris and soil containing the materials have been removed and analyzed. A preliminary analysis of these soil samples indicates no chemical warfare agent was present.

Schedule change

Due to the number of items found in the initial pit, it is necessary that we move the Vapor Containment Structure two times.

As a result of this and the unexpected delay caused by the emission of the gasses, our schedule for completing work on the first anomaly has been extended to October. Then we will move to the second anomaly.

For a more detailed account of our daily activities, please check our website, or call our Spring Valley information at 1-800-434-0988.

You can also reach me at the onsite project office Monday through Friday from 8 to 4:30 p.m. at 202-686-3359.



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Official Business



Corps investigates other anomalous areas; no munitions

On June 7 and 8 the Corps investigated several small anomalous areas of interest at the Glenbrook Road property as part of the ongoing effort to identify and remove World War I remnants from the site.

The investigation produced no munitions or chemical warfare materials, but the following items were uncovered:

Electrical wires for lighting, several pieces of rebar, root ball basket and weathered bedrock with heavy iron stain, nails, small pipe, wire handle, and a 4x6-inch electrical control box.



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Homepage: <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/environmental/springvalley.htm>

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