



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

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## Community-wide meeting held in April

### Lots on Lot 18

by Mary Beth Thompson  
Public Affairs Office

The 18 or so people who attended the community-wide meeting April 19 at the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church heard a project overview and learned about plans for arsenic-affected soil removal and the Lot 18 excavation from members of the Spring Valley project delivery team.

"Naturally, we would have been pleased with a larger gathering," said Gary Schilling, Spring Valley program manager.

"Yet, we sent detailed letters to residents affected by the upcoming soil removals and have met with or spoken with all of the residents affected by the Lot 18 investigations."

Most of the meeting was spent on Lot 18. Allyn Allison, project manager from the Corps' Huntsville Engineering Center, talked about the extensive effort being put toward protecting the workers and the community.

Allison described the "maximum credible event," or MCE, on which the Corps has based its planning. The MCE, which was recommended by the Corps and agreed upon by the project part-

### Lot 18 schedule

The schedule for the Lot 18 excavation has changed. The new tentative schedule is: mobilization to the site in late May and start of excavation in late June. Events occurring before the excavation are: site-specific hazard training, equipment set-up, operations training, a pre-operational survey by the Department of the Army, a tabletop exercise and a media tour. Dates will be posted on the website when they are determined.

ners, is the accidental release of one liter of lewisite.

He also defined the NOSE—the perimeter beyond which the population would experience "no significant effect" from a chemical agent release.

Allison explained that an engineering control structure will be used. The structure, an air-tight tent, will have redundant filtration systems and chemical and air monitoring capabilities that effectively reduce the NOSE to the inside of the tent.

He talked about the safety oversight from several agencies, the worker qualifications and training, and the protective clothing the workers will wear. Allison also discussed a typical day's operation, debris and soil



Excavation will take place within a tent equipped with air filtration systems designed to protect the public.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo

continued on p.2

## Community meeting *continued from p.1*

handling, and response to an emergency.

The audience asked questions during the presentations, and had opportunities to visit four information stations and talk individually with team members afterwards. Most of the discussion had to do with the Lot 18 excavation.

One question concerned symptoms of exposure to lewisite and mustard.

"Classic symptoms for both lewisite and mustard include reddening and burning of the eyes, burning in the throat and nasal passages, vomiting and increased activity of the mucus membranes," Allison said.

People who believe they may have been exposed should get out of the area and seek immediate medical attention, he advised.

Questions were asked about the engineering control structure and its ability to protect the public.

In answer to an audience member who asked whether the engineering control structure would also be used for the arsenic soil removals, Allison explained that the structure is used only for chemical warfare agent operations, such as that at Lot 18.

In response to another question, Allison said that the tent and air filtration system that will be used at Lot 18 is similar to what has been used at other locations in Spring Valley.

Two audience members asked about the impact of weather on operations at Lot 18.

"There are certain procedures we will follow, such as

not working in high wind or lightning," Allison said. "The tent has an anchoring system, but the team will not be working in adverse weather conditions for safety reasons."

He also explained that there is a procedure to control water runoff across the site and to capture any water that may fall into the excavation area.

The captured water will be tested before being discharged, and necessary permits will be obtained.

"We may continue work in a light rain, but the site safety personnel will make the ultimate decision at that time," he said.

Questions were asked about what the Corps expects to find at Lot 18, how long the work should take and whether the investigation would expand into other areas.

Schilling responded that the Corps expects to find municipal waste items, scrap ordnance and glass bottles but would not speculate on what specifically might be found.

He said the work would be conducted this year and next year.

"Lot 18 is the highest priority on the ordnance investigation at this time," he said. "The partners will look at other anomalous areas and prioritize future work."

During a discussion of soil



The work inside the tent will be remotely monitored by staff in the site operations office. *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo*

removal, one audience member commented that on some blocks, only one property has elevated levels of arsenic. Schilling responded that there has been a great deal of development in Spring Valley, which means movement of soil throughout the neighborhood. Contour maps, both old and new, show a lot of cut and fill data in the area, he said.

The project's partners were represented by Steve Hirsh of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Rick Du Bose and Jim Sweeney of the D.C. Department of Health.

The slide presentations are available on the Spring Valley web site: <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm>.

### Email updates available

The Corps prepares monthly project updates for elected officials, RAB members and other stakeholders. Residents who would like to receive copies of these via email should contact Ben Rooney, 410-962-0157.

# March, April RAB summaries

by Danielle Stern  
Community Outreach Team

## March

The Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board met March 9 at St. David's Episcopal Church to review various project issues. Some of these included Corps and task group updates, planning for Lot 18, status of the joint comfort letter, RAB operating procedures, the significance of the perchlorate finding at the Washington Aqueduct and

## Siren to be tested



Prior to work starting at Lot 18, the Corps of Engineers will test a siren in the Spring Valley neighborhood. This test will be conducted to ensure that the siren equipment is in working order.

The siren will be used to notify residents and American University personnel in the immediate vicinity of the dig site.

The Corps will mail a notification to all Spring Valley residents so that all are aware of the test date. Only those who have been contacted directly by the Corps will need to respond to the siren by Sheltering in Place

Lot 18 is located near the southwestern edge of the university campus and behind several Rockwood Parkway residential properties. The Corps is coordinating Lot 18 activities with the university.

historical photos of American University Experiment Station at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

After a vote on the RAB's operating procedures, it was decided that all community RAB members must reside within the formerly used defense site. However, the new clause will not apply to current RAB members until their terms expire.

Mark Baker, Corps historian, updated the RAB on the search for American University Experiment Station photos. Baker showed the 25 most representative photos, including the two he considers most significant. Discussion followed about the necessity to obtain others that remain at Fort Leonard Wood.

Tom Jacobus, chief of the Washington Aqueduct, presented an overview of the water treatment process at the Aqueduct and addressed concerns regarding perchlorate found in an outfall that drains groundwater into the Potomac River.

Jacobus told the RAB that drinking water is not affected by this find and that the Aqueduct monitors for chemicals during the treatment process.

In response to a RAB request, the Corps presented a map which overlaid historical points of interest and elevated arsenic areas. Gary Schilling, Spring Valley program manager, pointed out that there is no significant correlation between the points of interest and elevated arsenic levels.

## April

The RAB met again April 13 and dedicated the meeting primarily to discussion of the upcoming Lot 18 investigation. A

## Concerns about your health?

The D.C. Department of Health has a medical surveillance system to identify and monitor arsenic-related illnesses among Spring Valley residents. Residents who have concerns about exposure to arsenic are asked to contact Matthew Jones, Medical Affairs Office, **202-671-0733**. Dr. Daniel R. Lucey, D.C. Health's acting chief medical officer, oversees the system.

representative from the Corps' Huntsville Design Center outlined the Draft Final Lot 18 Work Plan, also known as Annex F. This presentation included a review of the tent, air filtration system and monitoring that will be used.

Science Applications International Corp. presented a detailed probability assessment on the likelihood of a one-liter release of lewisite, the maximum credible event.

SAIC concluded that the probability of the MCE is one in 50 million. The No Significant Effects distance is contained within the tent, or engineering controls structure, providing substantial protection to the public.

After the presentations, the RAB discussed the issues, and the audience was given time for comment and questions.

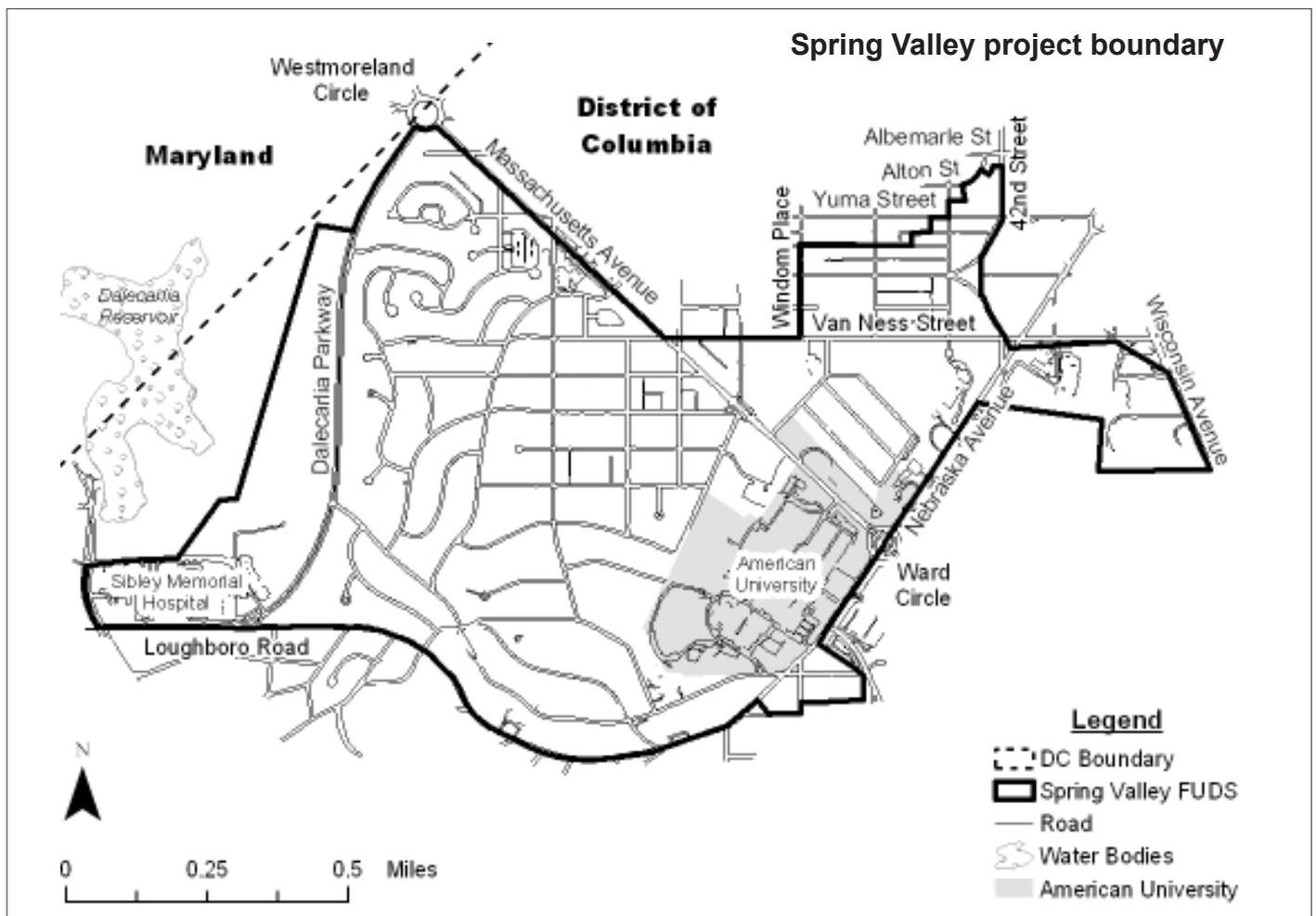
Minutes of all meetings are available on the project web site: <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm>.

The next meeting is June 8, at St. David's Episcopal Church, from 7 to 9:30 p.m.



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Official Business



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