



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

October-November 2003

Corps prepares removal and other activities for coming year

by Gary Schilling
Lead Project Manager, Spring Valley

Within the next several months, the Corps of Engineers plans to continue with the residential arsenic soil removals.

The Corps and its regulatory partners, the Environmental Protection Agency and the D.C. Department of Health, are preparing for the remaining residential soil removals in the Spring Valley neighborhood. This involves approximately 115 properties over the next several years.

The removals will begin after the approval of two documents that stem from the earlier released Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis, or EE/CA study.

One document, named the Responsiveness Summary, responds to the public comments received on the draft final EE/CA study document. The second document outlines the plans for further arsenic soil removal actions in Spring Valley, commonly called Action Memorandum.

These documents essentially provide the guidance to the project partners on how to address the remainder of the residential soil removals.

In other work, the Corps has begun testing soil samples collected from three areas outside

the project boundary. These three areas are located where elevated arsenic levels were found on properties along the project boundary.

Soil samples were collected from a total of six residential properties within these three areas. This effort, as well as any follow-on work that might be required, will follow the same methodology used in past soil investigation efforts.

Groundwater sampling

Also this year is a planned study of the groundwater in Spring Valley. The initial effort will be conducted in two phases. Phase I will identify general conditions of groundwater use and occurrence in the neighborhood.

Phase II, scheduled after the completion of Phase I, will examine the groundwater flow system in greater detail.

In this phase, monitoring wells will be installed at key locations to collect the water, and the samples will be analyzed to determine if the groundwater has been affected by past DoD activities.

American University Lot 18

The Corps and project partners have begun evaluating what additional safety measures will be employed when excavation work resumes at this site.

These new measures will be added because of the quantity of items that have been removed from this site, as well as the discovery of a small amount of Lewisite found in a sealed glass bottle.

The Lot 18 area is located near the southwestern border of the American University campus and several residential properties along Rockwood Parkway.

To date, several scrap ordinance items, broken and intact glassware, and residential-type trash dating from 1900 to the 1950s have been removed from the Lot 18 site.

Anomaly investigations

In other planned activities this year, the Anomaly Review Board (ARB), comprised of representatives from the Corps, D.C. Health and EPA, have reviewed the geophysical survey data that was collected from 12 residential properties in early 2003.

The ARB has determined that 17 anomalies on seven of these residential properties warrant further investigation, which will involve digging for the anomaly to determine its identity.

Coordination with property owners and work plans for this effort are currently being prepared by the Corps. Fieldwork could begin in early 2004.



Department of the Army
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 Baltimore District
 P.O. Box 1715
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October 2003 RAB meeting

The Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) met on Tuesday, Oct. 14 at St. David's Episcopal Church.

At the meeting, RAB members discussed some updated project information, as well as reviewed proposed changes to the RAB mission statement and objectives and operating procedures.

Corps of Engineers' Project Manager for Spring Valley, Gary Schilling, provided an update on the progress of the After Action Review, or AAR, for American University's Lot 18.

Schilling stated that the document was 99 percent complete, needing only the signature of Baltimore District's commander.

Schilling added that the AAR identified key areas that needed improvement, including following procedures and improving communication.

In other business, there was further discussion over the comfort letters for affected properties.

RAB member Woody Bolton announced that an EPA representative will attend the November RAB to participate in a discussion of the language in the Comfort Letter, including some of the EPA's - internal discussions on using the word "safe."

According to EPA representative, Steve Hirsh, the EPA is considering other ways to describe properties that are determined not to need any further action.

Hirsh also said that they are waiting to hear back from D.C. Health for their input as well.

The meeting then shifted to discussions on how the RAB would govern itself.

This discussion began with RAB Community Co-Chair Dorothy Zolandz reminding the group that the RAB co-chair election would take place in December.

The issue of how to proceed with this election would be discussed at the November RAB

meeting. An updated version of the overview and discussion of proposed changes to the RAB mission and objectives and operation procedures would also be discussed in November.

The November RAB meeting will be Wednesday, Nov. 12 at 7p.m. at the St. David's Episcopal Church on Macomb Street.

Concerns about your health?

In December 2002, the D.C. Department of Health established a medical surveillance system to identify and monitor any arsenic-related illnesses among Spring Valley residents.

Residents who may have concerns regarding exposure to arsenic and the medical surveillance effort are asked to contact Dr. Michael Richardson, Senior Deputy Director, Medical Affairs Office at **202-671-0733**.

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Baltimore Commander & District Engineer **Col. Robert J. Davis, Jr.**
Lead Project Manager **Gary Schilling**
Public Affairs Chief **Lucy Lather**
Public Affairs Specialist **Doug Garman**