



SPRING VALLEY PROJECT UPDATE: LOT 18 PLANNING

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www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is developing plans for the excavation of potential chemical warfare materiel (CWM) located at Lot 18 on the property of American University (AU). This summary includes a brief history of the site, a list of participating stakeholders, definitions of key protective principles and descriptions of the relevant plans. For any follow-up questions, comments or requests regarding this update, please contact Ben Rooney from our community outreach team at (410) 962-0157.

LOT 18 BACKGROUND

The Lot 18 debris area was discovered in fall 2002 during efforts to address elevated soil arsenic. Debris recovered thus far includes military and non-military wastes from the 1900 – 1950 timeframe. After consulting with our partners, USACE began open-air digging in November 2002 under the assumption that there was a low probability of encountering CWM. After four months of digging, this excavation was halted temporarily in April 2003 to focus funds on other priorities. While planning to return to the site, a few of the glass containers recovered previously were analyzed for CWM, with one container testing positive for Lewisite, a WW-I blistering agent. An After Action Review was conducted to evaluate shortcomings in the Lot 18 efforts, which was released to the public in November 2003 outlining several recommendations for improving future field excavations. As a result of the Lewisite recovered, USACE plans to return to the site and excavate the remaining wastes using high-probability protocols, which will start in late spring of 2004. Excavation of the Lot 18 debris field is likely to take one year to complete.

STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

USACE is committed to a transparent and inclusive cleanup of Lot 18, and is working closely with participating stakeholders to identify and work through all project needs, obtain Partnership consensus on USACE plans, and provide the community with clear information and the opportunity to give feedback.

Regulatory Agencies - Lot 18 is discussed with EPA Region III and DC Health at monthly Partnering meetings. Additionally, more detailed Lot 18 planning meetings are held as needed.

Emergency Responders – USACE has begun coordination with DC Emergency Operations Center, DC police and fire personnel, and medical facilities that have memoranda of agreements to support Spring Valley efforts.

American University – AU attends the monthly Partnership meetings and is a member of the Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board (RAB). Lot 18-specific coordination meetings also are planned.

Restoration Advisory Board – Monthly presentations on Lot 18 have begun and USACE will provide planning documents to RAB members and their technical advisor.

Elected Officials – Monthly summaries of project-wide and Lot 18 efforts are provided to interested members of Congress and DC Council members. USACE also provides project briefings upon request.

Impacted Residents – Early education for residents in the vicinity of Lot 18 will begin in January.

Spring Valley Community - USACE is planning a community-wide meeting and a public comment period to provide interested community members with the opportunity to review key documents and give feedback.

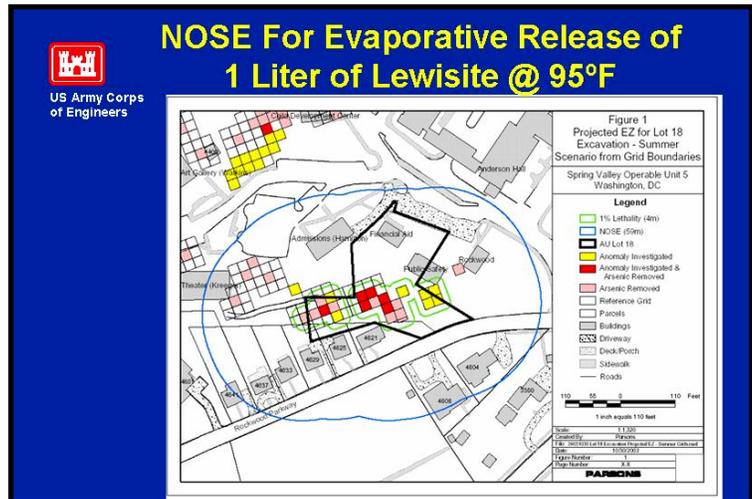
KEY PROTECTIVE PRINCIPLES

The **Maximum Credible Event (MCE)** is the worst, yet realistic, unplanned release of chemical agent that could occur at any time during the planned work at Lot 18. Considering the available historical information and the materials recovered at the site to date, the MCE agreed to by the Partnership is a 1-liter evaporative release of Lewisite.

The **No Significant Effects (NOSE)** perimeter is the distance from a CWM release at which the agent concentration in the air would have no significant effects on the exposed population. This distance is

calculated using an air dispersion model that takes into account a variety of factors including agent toxicity, temperature, wind speed, terrain, etc. The Lot 18 NOSE distance for 1-liter Lewisite MCE is 59 meters. This distance would include approximately 8 residences on the 4600 block of Glenbrook Road and a portion of AU.

An **Engineering Control (EC)** will be used at Lot 18 to reduce the NOSE distance to the confines of the dig site and protect the public in the event of a release. Placing a tent and air filtration system over the dig site will make the excavation possible without having to pre-evacuate surrounding homes. The EC will be set up with backup systems to further reduce the chance of an accidental release, including two, sequential air-filtration beds and dual power sources.



Shelter-in-Place (SIP) is a technique used at a variety of industrial and cleanup sites to protect workers and local populations from an accidental release of a toxic chemical. SIP consists of closing all windows and doors and shutting off ventilation systems immediately upon notification of an accidental release. These steps keep the released chemical from entering the home, minimizing exposure until the release dissipates. Although the tent system will be used at Lot 18 to contain agent vapors, SIP will be taught to those within the NOSE (calculated without the tent) as a precaution, in the remote case the tent system fails during agent recovery.

PLANS GUIDING INTRUSIVE ACTIVITIES

Site-wide Chemical Safety Submission (CSS) – This document outlines how intrusive activities are to be carried out at any site within the Spring Valley project. Plans within the CSS include the Conventional Ordnance and CWM Work plan (discussion of the MCE and NOSE), Sampling plan, Air Monitoring plan, Public Protection plan summary, Federal Property Storage Area Siting plan and Transportation plan.

Public Protection Plan (PPP) – This document contains broad public notification and protection information to be utilized for the various intrusive ordnance/CWM investigations conducted in Spring Valley. The PPP includes the Public Affairs plan (e.g., outreach timelines) and generic SIP information.

Lot 18 Work Plan – This annex to the CSS will detail the technical approach for conducting the Lot 18-specific excavation. This document will address specific scenarios that may be encountered during digging and the precautions to be taken. An appendix to this Lot 18 work plan will contain specific outreach plans to meet the information and notification needs of the residents who live within the calculated Lot 18 NOSE. Example work and public safety measures are listed below.

Handling and Assessment Procedures will be established for how glass or ceramic containers or potential ordnance items should be recovered.

Trained Personnel will be onsite during digging to address project needs. Involved Army agencies include the Baltimore District (operations oversight), Huntsville (daily project management), Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (air monitoring) and the Technical Escort Unit (ordnance-related support).

Response Procedures for personnel within the work zone will be established for equipment failures, ring-offs of agent detection alarms, and spontaneous fires within the tent, among others.

Communication Triggers will be delineated for identifying when USACE should inform its regulatory partners, DC emergency operations personnel and/or nearby property owners of progress, findings and emergency situations. For instance, if the agent detection alarm sounds at the monitor located between the first and second filter beds, the adjacent residents would be instructed to initiate SIP procedures.

Notification Mechanisms will be selected to inform project personnel and nearby residents in the event of an emergency. Options under consideration include onsite sirens and an e-mail and phone ring-down system.