



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
BALTIMORE DISTRICT, U. S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1715
BALTIMORE, MD 21203-1715
July 19, 2004

Letters to the Editor,
The Northwest Current
P.O. Box 40400
Washington, D.C. 20016-0400

To the Editor:

The Army Corps of Engineers requests a retraction of the *Current's* July 14 article concerning the Small Disposal Area in the Spring Valley Formerly Used Defense Site. Contrary to the article's assertions, the Corps shared all information with its regulatory partners and the community before, during and after the investigation of the Small Disposal Area.

The article's two sources who say they were not told both attended a [meeting Dec. 12, 2000](#), at which the Small Disposal Area was discussed, including the false lewisite reading. D.C. Health Department staff members working on the project at the time, including your source Richard Albright, were sent [sampling results by email](#) and hard copy in February 2001. These same reports were shared with EPA and American University.

In addition, the Corps:

- Sent [letters](#) to Spring Valley residents in September and November 2000 about the work at the Small Disposal Area;
- Held a Small Disposal Area [community meeting](#) Sept. 26, 2000;
- Discussed the Small Disposal Area in four issues of the [Corps'pondent](#), a newsletter for Spring Valley residents, from May to December 2000, and gave several updates in 2001;
- Issued a [news release](#) about the Small Disposal Area Jan. 3, 2001;
- Held a [media day](#) at the Small Disposal Area Jan. 5, 2001.

Your reporter did not check facts, nor did he bother to contact us with questions or ask for comment. He made unsubstantiated allegations, and the result was an erroneous story.

Even though a formal report on the Small Disposal Area has not been published, the information from that investigation has been used in our work plans and shared with both of our partners, with the property owner and with the residents of Spring Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Schilling".

Gary Schilling
Spring Valley Program Manager

MEETING MINUTES, SPRING VALLEY/CORPS COMMUNITY GROUP

US Army Corps of Engineers, Spring Valley

Temporary Office, Washington, DC

December 12, 2000

I. Introductions (*Maj. Plaisted, Project Manager, Baltimore District*)

Maj. Brian Plaisted and other meeting attendees introduced themselves.

II. Items From Previous Meeting (*Maj. Plaisted, Project Manager, Baltimore District*)

There were no items from the previous meeting to report on November 14, 2000.

III. Update on Arsenic Issue (*Major Plaisted*)

The removal action at 4801 Glenbrook began on December 4, 2000. The trees have been removed, and the excavation of soil has begun. This action is going slower than anticipated, as the Corps is working concurrently with the small disposal area project. As of Monday, December 11, the Corps has begun loading the contaminated soil into dump trucks and trailers to be transported to a landfill in Virginia. They anticipate the excavation being completed sometime after January 1. Backfill should be completed by the end of January 2001.

Removal will begin on the adjacent property sometime next week.

Sampling At Other Properties (*Major Plaisted*)

After detecting elevated arsenic levels at the Glenbrook Road property, the Corps decided to expand their sampling to neighboring properties. With this expansion the Corps wanted to ensure that they sampled all the area suspected to be called "Arsenic Valley" or "Baker Valley." A total of 61 properties were included in this area. Each lot was divided up into four quadrants; then soil was taken from six random locations within each quadrant. Thus there were four surface samples taken for each property. The surface samples ranged in depth from 0 to 6 inches. Also subsurface samples were taken from one location on each property. A sample was taken every foot to a minimum depth of 6 feet and a maximum depth of 10 feet.

Most of the samples were taken between late August and late September 2000. The AU sampling was completed before Thanksgiving. The only results that the Corps has received on AU are from the Child Development Center, which came back slightly elevated at 31-ppm arsenic. The Center director has been alerted and a doctor from ATSDR has been contacted. The doctor didn't feel that level was an immediate health concern, but suggested the Center take some precautions. One is to make sure the children are observed for "soil pica behavior," -- children who are deliberately eating dirt. The second is to wash children's faces and hands after playing outside.

Out of 61 properties, 42 have been sampled. There were 11 refusals, and 8 property owners never responded. Out of the 42 properties sampled, six have elevated levels of arsenic over 30 ppm, three properties have values between 15 and 20 ppm, and the rest are all below 15 ppm. The final results have been mailed to about two thirds of the property owners; the Corps is waiting for final results for the remaining properties.

The Corp plans to go back and do additional sampling at the properties with elevated arsenic

levels. They are in the process of reviewing at the data to determine the best procedures

In response to a question, Richard Albright discussed Point of Interest 16 (50th Street between Van Ness and Fordham), which is a square area with square ground scar patches visible. EPA thought it was a munitions storage area. Instead it was discovered to be a persistency test area. This was an area where mustard agent would have been sprayed on the gone to see how long its toxicity would persist. Any toxicity at this area would be long gone by now since the material would have been spread on the surface. Mr. Albright doesn't anticipate any problems with the testing and sampling already done in this area.

III. Update on Other Activities Since November 14 (*Major Plaisted*)

Small Disposal Area

The Small Disposal Area is located on American University campus and is adjacent to homes along Rockwood Parkway. This site contains laboratory glassware and metal debris in the soil. It was discovered by Richard Albright of DC Health in April 1999. Surface removal was performed and found that the debris went deeper than the surface. Subsurface removal occurred in January and March of 2000. In March, lewisite was detected with a near real-time monitoring system. Confirmation sampling was done of the air samples and soil samples in which no lewisite was found, however three other industrial chemicals were detected. These chemicals are mistakenly identified by the monitoring system as lewisite when sampled; however there is no confirmation of lewisite at the site.

Mr. Albright is convinced that the area is related to the American University Experiment Station, but the Corps believes that the evidence is not conclusive either way at this point. Five homes along Rockwood Parkway and two other buildings on the AU campus will be evacuated between January 8 and 11, 2001. A mechanical excavation will remove the soil. The spring in that area will be rerouted during the removal action.

This week the Department of the Army Safety Office will be present at the site to do a pre-operation inspection. By Thursday, Dec. 14 the inspection will be completed, and water tanks will be set up the week after Christmas. After January 1, final setup will be completed, and the excavation will begin January 8.

The excavator will remove the soil from the disposal area and place it on a table. Spotters will rake the soil into drums while simultaneously looking for intact containers or other significant items. One sample will be taken from each drum to be analyzed for chemical warfare material and then other hazardous materials.

Most of the materials that have been found have been broken glass and empty bottles. Procedures will be in place in case an intact and full container is found, in which it will be containerized in a multiple round container, a steel vessel with a gasket to seal it. This vessel is used to specifically handle chemical warfare material. All soil drums will be loaded into a truck and escorted to the Federal Property staging area by the police. The chemical containers will be transported to the MRC's with a police and ambulance escort.

Maj. Plaisted noted that all of the families displaced by the evacuation are entitled to

reimbursement for their expenses. He explained that the Army will reimburse for lodging, meals, pet kenneling, parking, additional mileage, special transportation, and any other expenses incurred because of the evacuation, within a reasonable amount. Any families that have any further questions can contact him anytime. DC Police will be providing security for the area on a 24-hour basis during the four-day excavation period.

Washingtonian Article

The Washingtonian article about the cleanup at Spring Valley appeared in the December 2000 issue. The Corps wrote a letter to the editor, which we anticipate will appear in the January 2001 issue. Major Plaisted explained that the Corps was concerned with the impression the article left with the community, which may mislead the community into thinking that there is buried ordnance and contamination throughout the whole of Spring Valley, which is untrue. Richard Albright disagreed with Major Plaisted and the Corps' observation, and felt the article depicted an accurate view of the situation at Spring Valley. The letter to the editor is posted on the Spring Valley project website (www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/washingtondc/dcprojects8.htm).

Major Plaisted stated that ATSDR (Agency of Toxic Substances and Disease Registry) will visit Spring Valley to present a health education meeting on the effects of arsenic on the body. This meeting will occur after the small disposal area removal in January 2001, and will be open to the public.

The community expressed some concerns about the future of this project and noted some topics they would like addressed. One member expressed his concern about the lack of communication to residents, and requested that information be more readily available such as by e-mail and on the Spring Valley website. Another community member said that most everyone is concerned about property values of the homes in Spring Valley, and the potential health risks involved with the contamination and removal action. Maj. Plaisted noted all the concerns and said the Corps will take them into consideration for potential changes in public involvement.

The next meeting was scheduled for January 16, 2001.

Meeting Adjourned

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Attendees Present:**Affiliation:**

Major Brian Plaisted	USACE, Baltimore District
Richard Albright	DC Health
Harry Harbold	EPA
Bill Hudson	EPA
Ginny Durrin	Spring Valley Resident
Michelle Kearney	Spring Valley Resident
Marion Mahoney	Possible AU student in family
Pat Brown	Miller Companies
Patrick Neill	Spring Valley Resident
Mike Magruder	Spring Valley Resident
Brian Kraft	Spring Valley Resident
Kristin Kleimann-Kraft	Spring Valley Resident
Jennifer Kraft	Former Spring Valley Resident
Stephanie Kraft	Spring Valley Resident
R. Lehovich	Spring Valley Resident
Scott Greenburg	Spring Valley Resident
John Birdsong	Spring Valley Resident
Sandra Birdsong	Spring Valley Resident
George McRitterick	Spring Valley Resident
Warren Getler	Witten Technologies
Howard Schaffer	Spring Valley Resident
Teresita Schaffer	Spring Valley Resident
Jonathan Hakim	Spring Valley Resident
Dan Bourque	Spring Valley Resident
Martin Teel	Spring Valley Resident
Linda Kildea	Spring Valley Resident
Colleen Dixon	CEC, Inc., Contractor Support

-----Original Message-----

From: Plaisted, Brian D MAJ NAB02

Sent: Friday, February 23, 2001 3:22 PM

To: 'Albright, Rich'; 'Harbold, Harry'; 'Hope, Gregory (DC Health)'

Cc: Reeser, Leland H NAB02; Rogers, Michael J NAB02

Subject: SDA Additional Excavation

Rich, Harry, & Greg,

Attached is the electronic versions of the small disposal area confirmation sample results and the map showing their locations. I had given you paper copies last week. Our recommendation is to remove two additional feet of soil in the area of samples CH02 and CH03 which are the samples with the elevated arsenic readings. We would then take additional confirmation samples looking at metals and SVOCs. We would remove additional soil if these follow-on samples exceeded the non-residential clean-up levels. We would like to do this as part of the plan to remove the sediment in the stream from the SDA to Glenbrook Road. If possible I would like to get your concurrence at the partnering meeting on Tuesday. The residents are anxious for us to continue with the stream sediment removal. Thanks.

Brian Plaisted

Small Disposal Area Characterization Samples
 Spring Valley Operable Unit 3
 Washington, DC

Analyte	OU3-SDA-CH01	OU3-SDA-CH02	OU3-SDA-CH03	OU3-SDA-CH04	OU3-SDA-CH05	OU3-SDA-CH06	OU3-SDA-CH07	OU3-SDA-CH08	OU3-SDA-CH09	OU3-SDA-CH10
VOCs (µg/Kg)										
1,1,1-Trichloroethane	6.39	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL		BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL
1,1,2,2-Tetrachloroethane	6.39	BQL								
1,1,2-Trichloroethane	6.39	BQL								
1,1-Dichloroethane	6.39	BQL								
1,1-Dichloroethene	6.39	BQL								
1,2-Dichloroethane	6.39	BQL								
1,2-Dichloropropene	6.39	BQL								
2-Butanone	12.8	BQL								
2-Hexanone	12.8	BQL								
4-Methy-2-pentanone	12.8	BQL								
Acetone	12.8	BQL	18.2	54.7	17.2	15.7	BQL	BQL	BQL	6.47
Benzene	6.39	BQL								
Bromodichloromethane	6.39	BQL								
Bromoform	6.39	BQL								
Bromomethane	12.8	BQL								
Carbon disulfide	6.39	BQL								
Carbon tetrachloride	6.39	BQL								
Chlorobenzene	6.39	BQL								
Chloroethane	12.8	BQL								
Chloroform	6.39	BQL								
Chloromethane	12.8	BQL								
Dibromochloromethane	6.39	BQL								
Ethylbenzene	6.39	BQL								
Methylene chloride	30.6	B	35	36.2	40	26.2	27.4	25.8	27.7	27.9
Styrene	6.39	BQL								
Tetrachloroethene	6.39	BQL								
Toluene	6.39	BQL								
Trichloroethene	6.39	BQL								
Vinyl chloride	12.8	BQL								
Xylene (total)	6.39	BQL								
cis-1,2-Dichloroethene	6.39	BQL								
cis-1,3-Dichloropropene	6.39	BQL								
trans-1,2-Dichloroethene	6.39	BQL								
trans-1,3-Dichloropropene	6.39	BQL								

Small Disposal Area Characterization Samples
Spring Valley Operable Unit 3
Washington, DC

Analyte	OU3-SDA-CH01	OU3-SDA-CH02	OU3-SDA-CH03	OU3-SDA-CH04	OU3-SDA-CH05	OU3-SDA-CH06	OU3-SDA-CH07	OU3-SDA-CH08	OU3-SDA-CH09	OU3-SDA-CH10
SVOCs (µg/Kg)										
1,2,4-Trichlorobenzene	426	BQL								
1,2-Dichlorobenzene	426	BQL								
1,3-Dichlorobenzene	426	BQL								
1,4-Dichlorobenzene	426	BQL								
2,2'-oxybis(1-Chloropropane)	426	BQL								
2,4,5-Trichlorophenol	426	BQL								
2,4,6-Trichlorophenol	426	BQL								
2,4-Dichlorophenol	426	BQL								
2,4-Dimethylphenol	426	BQL								
2,4-Dinitrophenol	852	BQL								
2,4-Dinitrotoluene	426	BQL								
2,6-Dinitrotoluene	426	BQL								
2-Chloronaphthalene	426	BQL								
2-Chlorophenol	426	BQL								
2-Methylnaphthalene	426	BQL								
2-Methylphenol	426	BQL								
2-Nitroaniline	426	BQL								
2-Nitrophenol	426	BQL								
3,3'-Dichlorobenzidine	852	BQL								
3-Nitroaniline	426	BQL								
4,6-Dinitro-2-methylphenol	852	BQL								
4-Bromophenyl-phenylether	426	BQL								
4-Chloro-3-methylphenol	426	BQL								
4-Chloroaniline	426	BQL								
4-Chlorophenyl-phenylether	426	BQL								
4-Methylphenol	426	BQL								
4-Nitroaniline	426	BQL								
4-Nitrophenol	852	BQL								
Acenaphthene	426	BQL								
Acenaphthylene	426	BQL								
Anthracene	426	BQL								
Benzo(a)anthracene	426	BQL	43.7	103	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL
Benzo(a)pyrene	426	BQL	37.7	92.8	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL
Benzo(b)fluoranthene	426	BQL								
Benzo(g,h,i)perylene	426	BQL								
Benzo(k)fluoranthene	426	BQL								
bis(2-Chloroethoxy)methane	426	BQL								
bis(2-Chloroethyl)ether	426	BQL								
bis(2-Ethylhexyl)phthalate	44.3	J	44.9	97.7	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL
Butylbenzylphthalate	426	BQL								
Carbazole	426	BQL								
Chrysene	426	BQL	BQL	114	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL
Dibenzo(a,h)anthracene	426	BQL								
Dibenzofuran	426	BQL								
Diethylphthalate	426	BQL								

**Small Disposal Area Characterization Samples
Spring Valley Operable Unit 3
Washington, DC**

Analyte	OU3-SDA-CH01	OU3-SDA-CH02	OU3-SDA-CH03	OU3-SDA-CH04	OU3-SDA-CH05	OU3-SDA-CH06	OU3-SDA-CH07	OU3-SDA-CH08	OU3-SDA-CH09	OU3-SDA-CH10	
Dimethylphthalate	426	BQL									
di-n-Butylphthalate	56.7	J	BQL								
di-n-Octylphthalate	426	BQL									
Fluoranthene	426	BQL	BQL	164	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	
Fluorene	426	BQL									
Hexachlorobenzene	426	BQL									
Hexachlorobutadiene	426	BQL									
Hexachlorocyclopentadiene	426	BQL									
Hexachloroethane	426	BQL									
Indeno(1,2,3-c,d)pyrene	426	BQL									
Isophorone	426	BQL									
Naphthalene	426	BQL									
Nitrobenzene	426	BQL									
N-nitrosodiphenylamine	426	BQL									
N-Nitroso-si-n-propylamine	426	BQL									
Pentachlorophenol	852	BQL									
Phenanthrene	426	BQL	BQL	80.7	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	
Phenol	426	BQL									
Pyrene	426	BQL	BQL	162	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	
Metals (mg/Kg)											
Aluminum	7090		20300	15100	42200	16100	14100	7870	26000	19300	8230
Antimony	0.417		2.47	5.65	BQL	1.12	BQL	BQL	BQL	0.859	BQL
Arsenic	4.54		136	24	1.66	4.5	4.41	1.59	4.38	3.86	1.52
Barium	41.2		191	175	68.4	52.5	56	39.1	66.9	47.2	40
Beryllium	0.523		0.775	0.884	2.55	1.26	0.712	0.409	1.93	1.11	0.445
Cadmium	0.613		1.93	2.15	0.941	0.182	0.202	0.111	0.452	0.14	0.171
Calcium	683		1720	1040	2290	649	355	541	960	663	605
Chromium	49.9		151	139	154	25	141	50.1	222	98.3	58.8
Cobalt	12.9		47.6	43.3	52.8	7.95	35.6	19	32.2	11	17.9
Copper	117		371	745	5.27	41.4	54.1	35.7	95.2	53.8	36.7
Iron	12400		52100	56200	41300	9770	28400	12900	48800	23100	14000
Lead	109		265	1460	13.8	54.8	16.8	14.2	51.1	11.3	23.3
Magnesium	3450		10400	30100	18100	2130	4920	1800	14400	3330	1980
Manganese	153		544	694	1470	149	808	357	320	89.8	312
Mercury	11.7		13.7	58.9	0.653	1.37	0.426	1.21	2.3	0.098	1.16
Nickel	42.5		127.0	409	119	22.2	33.1	16.6	142	45.2	18.6
Potassium	294		859	444	1400	613	223	294	953	411	311
Selenium	0.49	BQL	BQL								
Silver	0.424		3.01	3.01	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL	BQL
Sodium	113		294	225	184	92.1	BQL	112	99.2	75	63
Thallium	0.98	BQL	BQL								
Vanadium	22.9		136	57.1	61.2	16.5	72.1	32	88.2	51.2	32.1
Zinc	131		1050	513	74.1	51.9	46.6	34.8	134	41.9	38.6

CLEAN-UP LEVELS (EPA Region III)

Industrial; Arsenic 3.8 ppm, Lead 1600 ppm (not in the Region 3 guidance but a typical industrial number), & Mercury 610 ppm
Residential; Arsenic .43 ppm, Lead 400 ppm, & Mercury 23 ppm

**Small Disposal Area Characterization Samples
Spring Valley Operable Unit 3
Washington, DC**

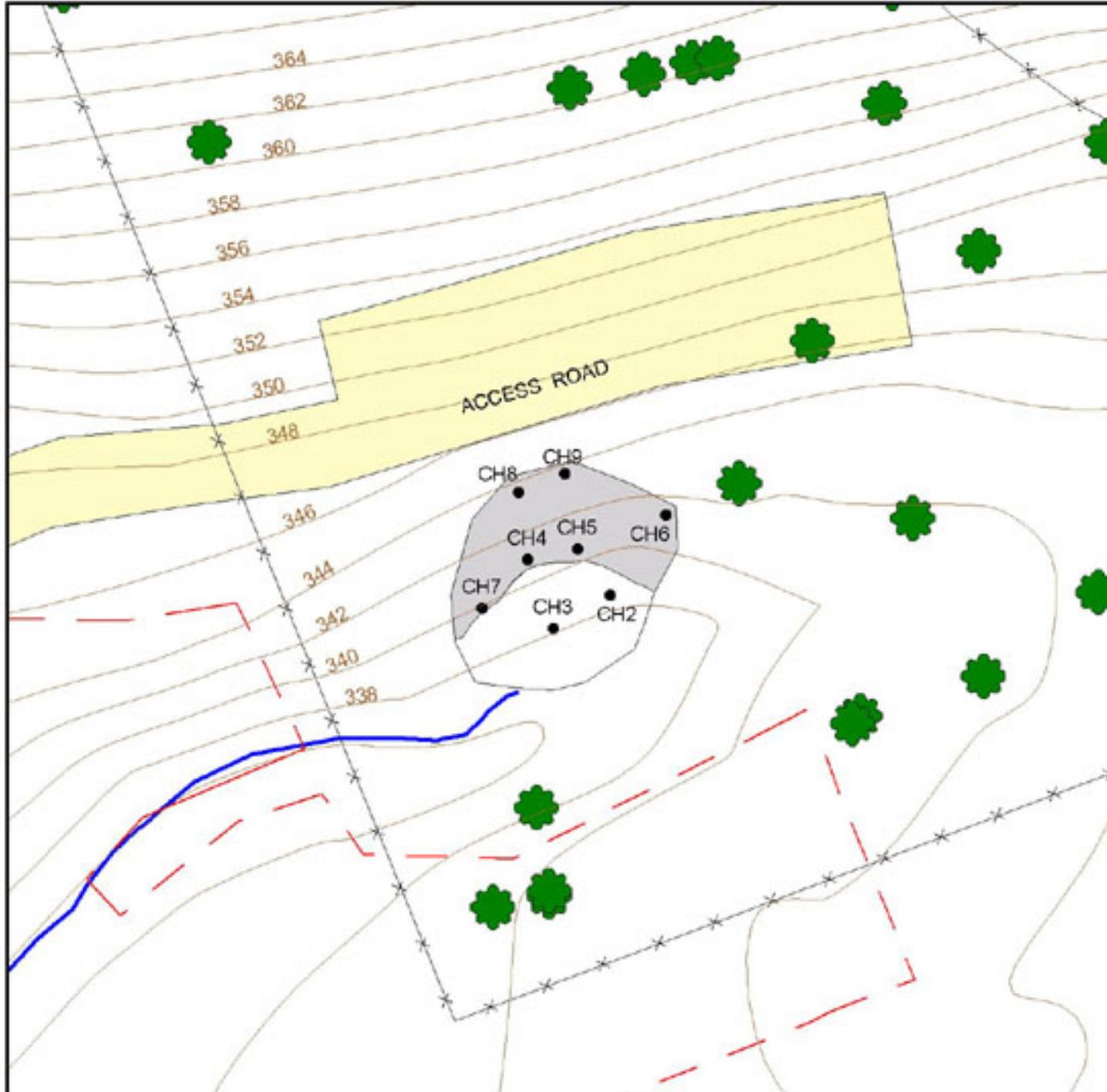
Analyte	OU3-SDA-CH01	OU3-SDA-CH02	OU3-SDA-CH03	OU3-SDA-CH04	OU3-SDA-CH05	OU3-SDA-CH06	OU3-SDA-CH07	OU3-SDA-CH08	OU3-SDA-CH09	OU3-SDA-CH10
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Figure X-X
Confirmation Sample Locations
Small Disposal Area

Spring Valley Operable Unit 3
Washington D.C.

Legend

- Contour Lines (2ft)
- Confirmation Samples
- New Fence
- Existing Fence
- Trees
- Stream
- Excavation Area
- Limits of Excavation
- Side of Excavation
- Access Road



20 0 20 Feet

1 inch = 20 feet

Scale:	1" = 20'
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Figure Number:	X-X
Page Number:	X-X



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
BALTIMORE DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 1715
BALTIMORE, MD 21203-1715
September 12, 2000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Programs and Project
Management Division

Sample of letter to residents

4633 Rockwood Parkway NW
Washington, DC 20016

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

This letter is to inform you of our plan to investigate the small disposal site on American University near your property. This area is a potential disposal site for waste associated with the American University Experiment Station during World War I. I will hold an information meeting for residents on Tuesday, September 26, 2000 at 7:00 p.m. at the Spring Valley Resident Office behind Sibley Hospital. I will cover specific details of the plan and answer your questions. If you are unable to attend, call me and I will set up an individual meeting with you.

The plan is currently being reviewed by the DC Health Department, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Department of Defense Explosive Safety Board (DDESB). Once we have concurrence from all the reviewers we will proceed with mobilization activities. Our plans call for mechanical excavation using a tracked excavator. Because of the difficult terrain we are unable to use a filtered structure, and therefore, we are required to evacuate an area approximately 200 feet around the disposal site. This will affect your home and five others as well as Rockwood Parkway and two buildings on American University. This part of the work requiring evacuation is expected to take several days. Tentatively the work is scheduled to take place the first week of November.

If you have any other questions please contact me at 410-962-6784 or 202-686-3359. As always, I appreciate the cooperation and support shown by the residents of the area in the past.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Brian D. Plaisted".

Brian D. Plaisted
Major, U.S. Army
Deputy District Engineer
for Spring Valley



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Programs and Project
Management Division

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
BALTIMORE DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 1715
BALTIMORE, MD 21203-1715
November 1, 2000

Sample of letter to residents

4633 Rockwood Parkway NW
Washington, DC 20016

Dear Mr. _____

This letter is to inform you of our plans to investigate the small disposal site on American University near your property. Based on the input I have received, the date for the actual investigation has been set for January 8-11, 2001. I am finalizing coordination details with American University so that we can begin preparatory activities the week of November 6th. These activities will consist of cutting down several large trees, constructing a temporary access road, emplacing a temporary fence, and constructing structures to mitigate the impact of water on the site from both runoff and the spring. The week of November 27th we will be conducting training at the site followed by two weeks of safety inspections.

The actual intrusive investigation will begin on January 8, 2001. You will be required to evacuate your home from 0700-1800 each of the four days. You are authorized to obtain lodging and will be reimbursed for your evacuation expenses. Since the situation for each evacuee is unique, we are not planning on providing a single solution for the resident's lodging needs. I have enclosed a copy of our evacuation reimbursement handout.

If you have any questions concerning this matter please contact me at 410-962-6784 or 202-686-3359. As always, I appreciate the cooperation and support shown by the residents of the area in the past.

Sincerely,

Brian D. Plaisted
Major, U.S. Army
Deputy District Engineer
for Spring Valley

MEETING MINUTES, SPRING VALLEY/CORPS COMMUNITY GROUP

US Army Corps of Engineers, Spring Valley
Temporary Office, Washington, DC

Small Disposal Area Community Meeting

September 26, 2000

<u>Attendees Present:</u>	<u>Affiliation:</u>
Major Brian Plaisted	USACE, Baltimore District
Ginny Durrin	Community
Sarae Leuckel	Community
Richard Albright	DC Health
Edward C. Bishop	Parsons Engineering
Howard Schaffer	Community
Teresita Schaffer	Community
Nancy Dudley	Community
Bijan Jabbari	Community
Colleen Dixon	CEC, Inc.

I. Introductions (*Maj. Plaisted, Project Manager, Baltimore District*)

Major Brian Plaisted and other meeting attendees introduced themselves.

II. Site Location & History (*Maj. Plaisted, Project Manager, Baltimore District*)

Major Plaisted presented the group a map that showed the evacuation distance of 59 meters, or 200 feet, around the small disposal area. The small disposal area is an area of broken lab glassware and metal pieces. The area is on American University property directly behind 4629 Rockwood Parkway.

Richard Albright of DC Health discovered the small disposal area on April 19, 1999. In June the Corps removed the surface debris and vegetation from the site. Approval for an intrusive plan to investigate the area using hand excavation was granted in December 1999. In January 2000, the soil digging began. Seventy-five percent of the work had been completed when a snowstorm came and made the area impossible to dig and work in. By the time the area was accessible again, it was the end of March, and the second intrusive investigation was under way.

While the Corps was working at the site in March, the near-real time monitoring system for chemical warfare agents detected the chemical agent Lewisite. The sampling results showed that no Lewisite was present; however, combinations of chemicals that mimic Lewisite were present. Even if the chemical was not present, the Corps must take extra safety precautions for people who live and work in the area.

The new intrusive investigation plan was finalized in August 2000, and is in the review process by EPA, DC Health, and the Department of Defense Explosive Safety Board.

III. Schedule of Work

Parsons Engineering is the primary contractor for this site. There will be about two weeks of mobilization, which includes putting in an access road and cutting down trees. Pre-operations training will take about two weeks. Department of Army Safety Office and conduct a two- to three-day pre-operations exercise to check all procedures and techniques for the excavation work.

The actual excavation will take about four days during which time the homes along Rockwood Parkway will need to be evacuated. Residents will have to evacuate from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day.

The demobilization period after all the excavation is completed will take about two weeks. This will involve restoring the site to its prior condition.

IV. Evacuation Issues

The date for the evacuation has not been set, but the Corps is looking at early to mid-January. The excavation and evacuation is impacting two primary buildings at American University, including the Admissions Building. The Corps is working with AU to find a suitable time to work that will minimize the impact to the school. They will contact Maj. Plaisted in the next week or so to finalize time and dates.

Rockwood Parkway will be closed during the same time as the excavation. Drivers coming by Glenbrook Road will be diverted to Indian Lane and Loughboro Road.

Maj. Plaisted explained that the Army would reimburse for lodging, meals, pet kenneling, parking, additional mileage, special transportation, and any other expenses incurred because of the evacuation, within a reasonable amount. Some residents expressed concern that the amount of money being allocated for lodging and meals might not be reasonable for a family with children. Maj. Plaisted noted that he does not think that will be a problem, but would verify this with his Resource Management office.

A community member expressed concern about the time of the evacuation, wondering if the Corps was locked into the time of 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. She noted that there is a large difference between getting a family out of the house by 7 a.m. and getting them out by 8 a.m. Maj. Plaisted responded that he chose those hours because at the time of year this work will be performed. The workers will need to use all the available daylight.

A community member recommended that the Corps enlist the assistance of the DC Metropolitan Police for security while the homes are evacuated. Maj. Plaisted assured him that they have already done so, and the area will be monitored 24-hours a day during the 4-day period by the police.

V. Technical Issues *(Edward Bishop, Parsons Engineering)*

Safety Basis

Edward explained that a Maximum Credible Event (MCE) is the worst-case credible scenario. In this case, the worst case is the evaporative, non-explosive release of a 5-gallon container of Lewisite. He noted they don't expect to find anything like that, but they are prepared to deal with it if it occurs. Mr. Bishop stated that the No Significant Effects (NOSE) distance around the site is in place so that any unprotected personnel would not be affected by a possible MCE.

Investigative Overview

The first step is Site Mobilization. An access road will be built, some trees will be removed, and a stream will be diverted. They will also conduct the operations training and pre-operational inspections at that time.

Mechanical Excavation

A track excavator (backhoe on tracks) will be used for digging. The soil will be placed in drums; Parsons will take samples, and move it to federal property for analysis. The soil will then be disposed of based on these results. Two to four days of excavation are expected, which can be done in one to two weekends, or two to four working days.

Site Preparation

It will be necessary to do some tree removal, stream/spring diversion, and runoff diversion. The water diversion is necessary to avoid any possible further contamination. The stream and spring will be captured, pumped into holding tanks, sampled, and depending on the results either placed back into the spring or into a sanitary sewer system. If it's extremely contaminated, it will be disposed of off-site. Once the stream is diverted, the workers will conduct the excavation. Currently there have been no elevated arsenic results downstream from the 4801 Glenbrook property either in the water or the sediment. There have been elevated arsenic results detected in the sediment just below the small disposal area and at 4801 Glenbrook.

Richard Albright reported that 3,340 parts per million (ppm) arsenic were found in the middle of the small disposal area site. Naturally occurring arsenic in the Spring Valley area ranges from 1 to 3 ppm. Normal urban background arsenic levels range from 3 to 8 ppm, with some levels as high as 18 ppm in some areas.

The Operation

Mr. Bishop showed the group a map of the site area and explained the location of the sump. The sump will pump into a 200-gallon tank, at a rate of 3 to 5 gallons per minute. During the operation, personnel within the exclusion zone will be in Level B protective suits with supplied air.

The excavator will scrape the surface of the soil with the excavator, and the observers will note any archeological artifacts or anything unusual in the soil. Any items worthy of additional study will be extracted from the soil, double-bagged, and placed in a 55-gallon drum to be checked. As the soil is being drummed it will be sampled for chemical warfare material and hazardous/toxic waste. Chemical warfare material will be incinerated; hazardous or toxic waste will be disposed of in a permitted landfill. Once the small disposal area is addressed the sediment downstream to 4801 Glenbrook will be removed. This will not require evacuation. The culverted areas will be "power-washed" and the sediment will be removed from the open stream areas.

A community member had a concern about the health effects of being exposed to chemicals from the stream as a child, particularly arsenic. Mr. Bishop and Maj. Plaisted noted that there has not been a current health study to evaluate exposure-related issues among residents, but recommended a book about arsenic from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). Anyone who wishes to receive this book can contact Maj. Plaisted directly and get the information for ordering.

Meeting Adjourned



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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May 2000

Search for chemical agents ends at Glenbrook property

by Maj. Brian Plaisted
Spring Valley Operations Officer

In the March issue of the *Corps'pondent*, we mentioned the efforts to excavate the final portion of the second pit on the Glenbrook Road site. We have completed this work and have found no chemical warfare agent or ordnance items at this area.

During our work, we collected soil samples, which are currently being analyzed. The initial results of these samples indicate that there is no contamination remaining in the soil there.

Once the review of the sample results is completed, we will backfill the second pit area with new soil. This essentially completes the search for buried chemical agents at the Glenbrook Road property.

Chemical items removed

During the year-long search of the two disposal pits on the Glenbrook Road property, 14 ordnance items containing World War I chemical warfare agent were removed from the two pits and sent to the federal property behind Sibley Hospital for safe storage.

On April 19 and 20, Army experts safely transported seven of these items to Pine Bluff Arse-

nal, Ark., for storage while awaiting disposal. The remaining seven items were transported to Edgewood Arsenal, Md., for research and testing.

In other work at the Glenbrook Road site, we are finalizing a comprehensive risk assessment of the site in order to evaluate if any risk to human health is posed by the elevated arsenic levels in soil at the Glenbrook property.

Analysis of surface soil samples collected in February indicated that the elevated arsenic levels discovered on the property are confined primarily in the area near the pit excavations.

Additional samples needed

To further investigate the site, we are preparing work plans for subsurface sampling at the site. Samples will be taken at 2-foot intervals to a maximum depth of 10 feet at 10 different locations on the property.

Given the results of the February testing, we will recommend appropriate cleanup actions as part of an engineering evaluation of possible alternatives.

The risk assessment and engineering evaluation documents are scheduled to be completed and available for public review in June. We will post the date on

our website and information line when the documents are available.

Copies of the documents will be placed in the project's document repository at the Palisades Library as well as at the federal property location behind Sibley Hospital.

Although the elevated arsenic levels are confined primarily to the pit excavations, Corps experts have reviewed the historical data of the adjacent area and believe it is prudent to conduct additional arsenic sampling at properties adjacent to the Glenbrook Road property.

Detailed plans are currently being developed for the sampling.

Under this plan, four surface and one subsurface soil sample will be taken and analyzed per half acre.

Meeting planned May 31

Property owners affected by the sampling will soon receive letters about the upcoming work and will have an opportunity on May 31 to talk one-on-one with Corps officials and our partners about their property and the proposed plan.

Please feel free to call me at **202-686-3359** if you have questions or need further information.



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Corps to clean up small disposal area adjacent to A.U.

While working at the Glenbrook Road property this past January, Army ordnance experts began the cleanup of a small area adjacent to the property and near American University's Kreeger Hall, which contained pieces of metal and glass debris.

Due to bad weather, workers could only complete about 75 percent of this work. No hazardous items were recovered.

When work at this area resumed March 30, workers uncovered several large ceramic pieces, which they containerized

in plastic. They also collected an air sample, and the results indicated trace amounts of industrial chemicals.

Although these compounds are not chemical warfare agents, they do interfere with the Corps' on-site monitoring system. Because of this interference, Corps personnel will develop a new plan to address this situation.

It is anticipated that a filtered tent structure will be used to contain any vapors while experts complete the remaining cleanup of this area, currently

scheduled to begin in August.

In the meantime, this small area has been covered and sealed and fencing has been installed around the area in question.

For more information on our work activities, you may call the Spring Valley Information Line at 1-800-434-0988.

Weekly updates are recorded on this phone line, and are posted to the Spring Valley website at:

<http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm>

The Corps'pondent

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News Release

Release No. 01-01b

Contact: Doug Garman or Maj. Brian Plaisted

For Release: January 11, 2001

Phone: 410-962-2809 or 202-686-3359

Corps completes cleanup of small disposal area near American University, no chemical warfare materiel found

Baltimore - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, announced today that it has completed the soil removal and cleanup of a small disposal area located near American University in the Spring Valley neighborhood of Washington, D.C., pending the analysis of soil samples taken during the excavation work. Corps officials expect these test results next week.

During the four days of work that began Monday, Jan. 8, the Corps safely removed 160, 55-gallon drums of soil and glass and metal debris. No chemical warfare materiel was detected during the cleanup effort. All the soil removed from the site has been tested and is waiting to be transported to an off-site landfill. Restoration of the site is expected to begin next week.

Residents evacuated during the work have returned to their homes. The two buildings on American University and the portion of Rockwood Parkway that were closed during the daytime removal work have been reopened.

- 30 -

<http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm>



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Corps of Engineers to hold media day at Spring Valley, January 5

Baltimore - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, will hold a media day **Friday, January 5 at 11 a.m.**, to discuss the resumption of its cleanup of a small disposal area near American University. This site was identified last year during the Corps' cleanup of World War I materials at the Glenbrook Road property in the Spring Valley neighborhood of Washington, D.C.

At the media day, Corps representatives involved in the cleanup will explain the upcoming work activities and answer questions. Those planning to attend the media day should report to the parking lot between the Kreeger and Watkins buildings on the American University campus. This will be the only opportunity to photograph or videotape the work area.

Last January, the Corps conducted a surface cleanup of the small disposal area located along Rockwood Parkway and adjacent to American University. Workers removed soil, along with metal and glass debris, from about 75 percent of the site. The soil and debris were tested and no chemical warfare materials were found. In March, workers uncovered several large ceramic pieces, placed them in plastic containers and collected air samples. Results of the air sampling indicated trace amounts of three industrial chemicals. Because these chemicals interfered with on-site air monitoring equipment, work stopped until a new cleanup plan could be developed.

From January 8-11, the Corps will resume its cleanup of this area. Soil and any significant debris will be removed and tested. As a safety precaution during this work, arrangements have been made with residents of five neighboring houses to leave their homes during the planned daytime work. Arrangements have also been made with officials at American University to close a small portion of the campus. In addition, Rockwood Parkway will be closed to motorists between American University and Glenbrook Road from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. during each of the four days of work. Motorists are advised to use Loughboro Road to Indian Lane as an alternate route.

In other work in the Spring Valley neighborhood, the Corps is continuing its soil removal activities at the Glenbrook Road site. Surface soil containing elevated levels of arsenic is being removed and replaced with new soil. This work will likely be finished in a few weeks.

Historical records indicate that portions of the Spring Valley neighborhood were once used by military personnel assigned to the former American University Experiment Station from 1917 to 1919, to conduct research and testing of World War I chemical warfare materials.

- 30 -