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# News Release

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## Corps to start Fiscal Year 2005 work at Spring Valley's Lot 18

**Baltimore** — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, plans to resume digging at Lot 18 in the Spring Valley neighborhood of Washington, D.C., Monday, Nov. 15. The Lot 18 investigation is part of the Corps' ongoing cleanup of a former World War I defense site in Spring Valley.

Workers returned to the site today to set up equipment and conduct equipment and procedural checks. New personnel are undergoing training. Those activities should take one week, and then excavation may resume.

The Corps began digging at Lot 18 in November 2002 and worked through May 2003. A small amount of liquid in a sealed glass container recovered from the site contained approximately 0.3 percent lewisite, a WWI chemical warfare agent. Because of this discovery, officials revised work plans to include additional protective engineering controls.

Excavation resumed June 24 of this year with extensive safety precautions in place. Workers from contractor Parsons of Fairfax, Va., wore personal protective gear and dug within an airtight tent. Other safety measures included redundant chemical filtration systems and air monitoring. Work was done under strict oversight from multiple agencies. Digging was stopped for the 2004 fiscal year Aug. 10.

"It was always the plan to pause when we were near the end of the fiscal year's funding," Craig Georg, project manager, said.

During the downtime, the project team studied ways to improve productivity. A larger worktable, called a "sifting" table, and more workers will be used when the dig restarts. Procedural changes that should reduce work stoppages will also be adopted.

"The speed of the investigation was lower than expected last summer, so we examined the productivity challenges" Georg said. "The increase in efficiency we can achieve will be known after we start up again and actually use the new methods in the field."

The extensive safety measures used last summer will remain in place.

Lot 18 is located on the southeastern edge of the American University campus adjacent to homes on Rockwood Parkway.

For periodic project updates, call the Spring Valley information line at 1-800-434-0988, or visit the project web site,

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