

# The Corps 'p'ondent



A newsletter by the  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for  
Spring Valley Project area residents

## What is the Site-Wide Remedial Action?

While over the past several years the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been carrying out cleanup activities at sites identified as having the highest risks associated with the Spring Valley Formerly Used Defense Site, the Army Corps is now carrying out what is referred to as the Site-Wide Remedial Action. This edition of the Corp'spondent touches on two of the four aspects underway of the Site-Wide Remedial Action:

- Addressing potentially remaining buried munition hazards (see page 1)

- Completing the cleanup of the Lot 18 debris field at the site of the former Public Safety Building at American University (see page 3)

The other two main aspects of the Site-Wide Remedial Action are:

- Addressing small areas where potential soil contamination may be present on one private property and southern American University

- Continued community outreach program and long-term oversight of the site.

It is important to note that all property owners where further cleanup work has been proposed have been notified. Anyone wishing to learn more about the Site-Wide Remedial Action is welcome to visit the Site-Wide section of our project web site at:

[www.nab.usace.army.mil/home/SpringValley/Site-Wide](http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/home/SpringValley/Site-Wide)

June 2018 -- Vol. 19, No. 1

## Field efforts to remove potential buried munitions items begins

Crews working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have begun the efforts in the field on the first properties identified for further investigation to mitigate potential unacceptable explosive hazards due to munitions and explosives of concern (MEC) that may remain within the Spring Valley Formerly Used Defense Site.

This work will occur at 91 out of the ~1,600 Spring Valley properties and 12 government-owned lots. All property owners involved in this effort have been notified during the planning process for this effort.

While there are no known munitions hazards on these properties, this work is being done, as always, out of an abundance of caution and concern for the safety of residents and community members.

The work at the properties, part of what is called the Site-Wide Remedial Action, involves working closely with property owners to coordinate for crews to map accessible portions of their lots for metallic anomalies buried underground.

Crews are then using state-of-



*A contractor begins the process of civil surveying a property as preparations before investigating for potentially buried explosive hazards. This sort of work, surveying and assessing landscaping, is the first step and comes before the use of more sophisticated equipment to identify buried munitions items.*

the-art Advanced Classification technology to locate and remove selected anomalies that are determined to resemble munitions.

The work at all 91 properties and 12 government-owned lots is expected to take approximately three years to complete.

## Team works with Partners and community to determine return-to-work plan to remove remaining soil at 4825 Glenbrook Road

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been considering potential approaches for returning to intrusive work at the 4825 Glenbrook Road project site in recent months. All of the proposed return to work options have been discussed with our regulatory Partners, the Environmental Protection Agency and the D.C. Department of Energy and Environment, the community's independent Technical Assistance for Public Participation consultant Peter DeFur, and the property owner, American University. This has been a very collaborative process and we have considered input from all parties.

The site has remained in a non-intrusive mode since last summer's exposure incident while the team was working along the shared property line between 4825 and 4835 Glenbrook Road. Approximately 350 cubic yards of contaminated soil remain to be excavated in this area. The remaining soils have been sampled again to assist the team in developing our return to work plans.

Since the incident, the Army convened a formal Board of Investigation, independent of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project team, to investigate the

*(4825 Glenbrook on page 2)*

# 4835 Glenbrook Road basement sampling effort complete

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has completed its soil sampling efforts beneath the foundation of the residence at 4835 Glenbrook Road. The soil sample results indicated no detections for Lewisite, Mustard or Mustard breakdown products.

The sampling was part of an effort to evaluate the possibility of contamination beneath the residence at 4835 Glenbrook Road and to determine if there was a need for further investigation or cleanup. This effort stemmed from crews encountering contaminated soil along the shared property line between 4825 and 4835 Glenbrook Road plus feedback from the Partners and the community.

Our on-site team took a total of 148 soil samples from 52 boreholes advanced through the basement floor and into the soil underneath the house. While no chemical agent was encountered in the samples, crews did encounter small fragments of broken glass that

were likely associated with past American University Experiment Station (AUES) work in one borehole sampled. Additionally potentially AUES-related chemicals were found in two other boreholes adjacent to the shared property line where contaminated soil is being removed.

All soil samples have been sent to a commercial lab for additional analysis; the results are pending final validation. In addition to those pending lab results, the team will also collect and analyze soil gas samples from 10 boreholes that were designed to allow for this effort.

Once the commercial lab results and the soil gas sampling is complete, the team will examine that data in conjunction with the existing sampling data. This will better inform the team and the Spring Valley Partners regarding the potential for contamination at 4835 Glenbrook Road, and assist them in determining whether further action is needed.

*(4825 Glenbrook continued from page 1)*

incident, and develop findings and recommendations to avoid a similar incident in the future at our site and/or others similar sites.

The Board determined the incident was localized to a small area of the site where the crews were digging in contaminated soil with hand tools. Additional site constraints, including the enclosed excavation area which was surrounded on multiple sides by walls of soil and a large concrete footer and weather conditions which included the afternoon heat and no wind contributed to the incident. The effects of the potential exposure were brief, with no long-term impacts. Additional crew

members who were within several feet of these workers did not experience any symptoms.

Based on the recommendation of the Board, in future efforts at the site, the crews working with the contaminated soil will wear respiratory protection, and the project team will look to implement enhanced air monitoring.

The team is also exploring the use of mechanical excavation instead of hand digging to minimize direct handling of the contaminated soil by the crews on site.

In addition to discussing the potential return to work concepts with our Partner's, we have also presented

this information at the Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board meetings, to gather feedback from the community and address potential concerns. Minutes of these meetings are available on the project website. Restoration Advisory Board meetings are open to the public and held at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every odd month, in the undercroft of St. David's Episcopal Church at 5150 Macomb Street. The next RAB will be held on Tuesday, July 10.

The team hopes to present a update of our work plans to the RAB at its July meeting, with the intent of resuming work at 4825 Glenbrook Road this fall.

## 4825/4835 Glenbrook Road Path Forward

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Summer/Fall</b> | <b>Collect soil gas samples at 10 locations throughout basement area of 4835 Glenbrook Road</b>                                  |
| <b>July</b>        | <b>Continue to update Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) on progress on path forward for 4825 and 4835 Glenbrook Road</b>          |
| <b>September</b>   | <b>Present final update of work plans to the RAB and announce actual start date for returning to work at 4825 Glenbrook Road</b> |
| <b>Fall/Winter</b> | <b>Resume the soil removal operation along the 4825/4835 Glenbrook Road property line</b>  |

# Crews implementing cleanup action below slab of AU's former Public Safety Building starting this summer



*Foundation slab of American University's former Public Safety Building. Army Corps crews will remove the slab this summer and remove potential contamination below it that would have been associated with a nearby disposal pit that has already been cleaned.*

With American University's recent demolition of the aged Public Safety Building, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers team is preparing to remove the building foundation and safely remove any potential contamination associated with the former American University Experiment Station that may remain under the foundation.

During the World War I-era, a portion of the American University campus was dedicated to the establishment of the American University Experiment Station (AUES) by the U.S. government for research, training of troops, and testing of chemical agents, equipment, and munitions. The establishment of this experiment station led to the use of designated areas for waste disposal of both Army and non-Army debris, a common, acceptable practice during that time. One of these areas, which was previously investigated by the Army Corps, on the southern portion of the AU campus is an area often referred to as Lot 18 or the Lot 18 disposal area which includes the site of American University's former Public Safety Building.

The Lot 18 disposal area became an area of concern in the early 2000s, around the same time an arsenic investigation and removal effort by the Army Corps got underway. The Army Corps and their regulatory Partners (Environmental Protection Agency, the D.C. Department of Energy and the Environment) agreed that a number of items identified beneath the surface during the investigation warranted further intrusive (i.e., excavation) investigation.

From 2002-2010, the investigation and removal of

anomalies in Lot 18 was conducted, including investigating and excavating the soil up to the foundation of the former Public Safety Building.

Contaminated soil and some suspected AUES-related glassware and one munition debris item were removed from around the building's foundation. Additionally, horizontal drilling beneath the Public Safety Building was conducted to obtain soil samples, but no AUES-related debris was encountered in that effort.

Since AU (the property owner) had separate plans to remove the old building and demolished it in August 2017, the Army Corps is taking this opportunity to remove the soil underneath the former building's foundation to ensure that no suspected AUES debris remains.

The team's efforts to remove the cement foundation slab and potentially contaminated soils under the former Public Safety Building is tentatively scheduled to begin this summer. During this work, the nearby community can expect disturbances similar to normal construction activities in the area; including a fenced off area with restricted access and some noise associated with heavy equipment. All work plans and safety procedures are reviewed by internal Army experts, as well as our regulatory Partners. Safety remains the number one priority for the Army Corps.

**Anyone interested in learning more about the above work or any other aspects of work going on in Spring Valley can contact the Spring Valley Community Outreach Team by calling 800-434-0988 or can find more about all of these efforts on our project website at:**

**[www.nab.usace.army.mil/home/SpringValley](http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/home/SpringValley)**

*The Corps'pendent* is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1 and published by the Corporate Communication Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, P.O. Box 1715, Baltimore, Md. 21203-1715. Phone: 410-962-2809 or Spring Valley Information Line: 800-434-0988. It is printed on recycled paper. Material from this publication may be reproduced without permission.

Views and opinions are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

\* To be added to our email list please email Rebecca Yahiel with the Community Outreach Team at [rebecca.e.yahiel@usace.army.mil](mailto:rebecca.e.yahiel@usace.army.mil).\*

Spring Valley Website: [www.nab.usace.army.mil/Home/SpringValley](http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/Home/SpringValley)

**Baltimore District Commander & District Engineer .....Col. Ed Chamberlayne**  
**Project Managers .....Dan Noble, Brenda Barber, Alex Zahl and Todd Beckwith**  
**Public Affairs Specialist ..... Christopher Gardner**





Department of the Army  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Baltimore District  
P.O. Box 1715  
Baltimore, MD 21203-1715

## Restoration Advisory Board welcomes and farewells

The Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board has had recent turnover and we'd like to thank those who have served on the RAB while also welcoming the two newest members.

A special thank you to Jim Sweeney, who represented the D.C. Department of Energy and Environment on the Spring Valley RAB, and has done so since the very first RAB meeting. He retired at the end of June, having served the D.C. government for more than 45 years. A special thank you as well to Linda Argo, having represented American University on the RAB, and community members Ralph Cantral and Kathleen Connell. They have also finished their time with the RAB, and we thank all of them for their years of participation on the RAB.

The RAB welcomed two new community members at the May meeting, Jennifer Baine and Paul

Birmingham. Interim replacements will represent DOEE and AU until permanent members are assigned by each organization.

You can find more about the RAB, including how to contact members and learn more about participation, by visiting the RAB section of the Spring Valley website at:

<http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/Home/Spring-Valley/Community-Participation/>

The RAB is comprised primarily of Spring Valley community members, but also includes officials involved in the project, and acts in an advisory capacity to assist the government agencies engaged in the investigation and cleanup of the Spring Valley Formerly Used Defense Site. The primary purpose of the RAB is to involve the local community in the decision making process.

**The RAB meets at 7 p.m. the second Tuesday of every odd month at St. David's Episcopal Church, 5150 Macomb Street, NW. Meetings are open to the public.**

---

### Remaining 2018 RAB Schedule:

**July 10**

**September 11**

**November 13**