

U.S. Navy Environmental Restoration Program

The U.S. Navy's mission is to maintain, train, and equip a world-class, combat ready fleet capable of winning wars, deterring aggression, and maintaining freedom of the seas. Support of this mission requires wide-ranging networks of land-based facilities. As these facilities operated over the years, in some cases contaminants were released to the environment, particularly in early years before safe handling and waste management practices had evolved. Because the Navy is committed to protecting both human health and the environment at its facilities, it has implemented an innovative and efficient Environmental Restoration Program to clean up areas impacted by its activities.

History

The Environmental Restoration Program began in the early 1980s in response to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, also known as Superfund. The program's initial phase, called the Installation Restoration Program, addresses sites that were contaminated with chemicals and hazardous substances. Beginning in 2001, the Navy initiated a second phase of the Environmental Restoration Program to address sites with munitions and explosives-related contaminants (excluding operational ranges). This program, called the Munitions Response Program, has completed initial surveys to identify sites and is performing more detailed site investigations to support decisions for cleanup. These two combined phases make up the Navy's Environmental Restoration Program.



Goals

Goals of the Navy's Environmental Restoration Program Include:

- Complying fully with federal, state, and local requirements; acting immediately to eliminate human exposure to contamination that poses an imminent threat, including removing or containing the contamination.
- Giving top priority to cleaning up sites which pose the greatest risk to human health and the environment.
- Developing partnerships with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, state, and local regulatory agencies.
- Involving the local community through Restoration Advisory Boards (RABs).
- Encouraging participation with timely information and opportunities for public comment and taking all comments into account when making decisions.
- Expediting the cleanup process and demonstrating a commitment to action.
- Considering current, planned, and future land use when developing cleanup strategies.

Through public input and its partnerships with regulatory agencies, the Navy is committed to meeting or exceeding these goals.

Looking Ahead

As of the end of fiscal year 2010, the Navy has 3,834 legacy installation restoration sites, 330 munitions response sites, and 107 compliance cleanup sites at Navy and Marine Corps facilities. Many of the installation restoration sites are on track to have remedies in place (RIP) or response complete (RC) by 2014. The munitions response sites are expected to have RIP or RC in place by the end of 2020.

The Navy will continue working toward the goal of a clean, healthy environment that supports the fleet mission, without repeating past practices. The Navy seeks continual improvements to the Installation Restoration Program and the Munitions Response Program, fostering innovative investigation and cleanup decisions through technical workgroups, educational opportunities, and annual conferences that bring restoration staff together to share lessons learned. In addition, working through community-supported RABs, the Navy continues to share information with stakeholders about these programs while promoting understanding of total Navy readiness issues.



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Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Calverton



Background

NWIRP Calverton, New York was a Government-Owned Contractor-Operated (GOCO) facility located in Suffolk County on Long Island, approximately 70 miles east of New York City. Established in 1954 for the development, assembly, testing, refitting, and retrofitting of Naval combat aircraft; Northrop Grumman Corporation was the sole operator of the facility from its construction in the early 1950s until it closed in February 1996.

NWIRP Calverton was involved in other activities including: operation of paint shops, machine shops, vehicle maintenance shops, pest control shops, battery shops, print shops, electrical shops, boiler plants, wash racks, fire-fighter training; and degreasing and storage of oil and chemicals.

In 1996, the land was returned to Navy control. In September 1998, the majority of the land within the developed section of the facility was conveyed to the Town of Riverhead for economic redevelopment. Four noncontiguous parcels of land totaling approximately 355 acres and consisting of Parcel A (Site 2 – Fire Rescue Training Area), Parcel B (Sites 6A – Former Fuel Calibration Area and 10B – Engine Test House), Parcel C (Sites 7 – Fuel Depot and 10A – Jet Fuels Systems Lab), and Parcel D (Sites 1 – Northeast Pond Disposal Area and 9 – Electronics Countermeasure Area) were retained by the Navy to continue Environmental Restoration (ER) program activities. This transfer was authorized under Congressional legislation (PL 103-337). The runway buffer lands outside of the fenced area (approximately 2,935 acres) were transferred to New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) for conservation and public recreation. One parcel of buffer land, consisting of approximately 140 acres was designated by the Legislation for transfer to the Veterans Administration that manages the adjacent Calverton National Cemetery.

In 2007, two additional parcels (Parcel C1 and Parcel D) were transferred to the Town of Riverhead. Parcel C1 (Site 10A – Jet Fuel Systems Laboratory [2 acres]) was transferred with residual contamination underneath a concrete slab and requires future inspections to ensure protection of human health. Parcel D (Sites 1 – Northeast Pond Disposal Area and 9 – Electronic Counter Measures (ECM) Area [145 acres]) was transferred without environmental restriction.

There are currently no operational activities being conducted on the Navy's 209 acres. Current Navy actions are limited to environmental investigations and cleanup.

Regulatory History

NWIRP Calverton was a GOCO facility leased by the Navy to NGC. The Navy initiated its environmental restoration, study, and investigation efforts under the NACIP Program by conducting an Initial Assessment Study in 1986. The IAS recommended additional evaluation at several sites.

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), or the "Superfund" Act, was passed to investigate and remediate areas resulting from past hazardous waste management practices.

The NACIP program was changed in 1986 to reflect the requirements of the CERCLA as amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA). This revised program is referred to as the IRP.

To determine whether contamination was present at the sites identified in the IAS, soil and groundwater samples were collected and evaluated in the 1992 Site Investigation (SI).

After the completion of the SI, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), NYSDEC, and Navy evaluated the site data and determined that site investigation and completion should proceed under the RCRA program and the NWIRP was not included on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) National Priorities List (NPL). Since NWIRP was not a NPL facility, the State oversees the cleanup conducted by the Navy. USEPA supports NYSDEC in its oversight activities in accordance with the requirements of the previous USEPA facility permit (USEPA ID Number NYD003995198) dated May 11, 1992. The requirements of both permits are similar, although the terminology and format vary. The facility is also a State Superfund site and is subject to Part 375 requirements.

In accordance with the requirements of the NYSDEC Division of Solid & Hazardous Materials, a Part 373 Permit was issued to the Navy on April 18, 2000 under the NYSDEC implementing regulations (6 New York Code of Rules and Regulations [NYCRR] Part 621). This permit superseded and replaced the original Part 373 Permit to Operate a Hazardous Waste Storage Facility that was issued to then Grumman Aerospace Corporation on March 25, 1992. The new permit, issued only to the Department of the Navy, dealt exclusively with the Solid Waste Management Units (SWMU) that remained on the former NWIRP Calverton property and any corrective actions that may have been required to address each site.

Currently, there are no operational activities or process-type operations being conducted at the Calverton facility that could generate hazardous waste nor are there any requirements for storage of hazardous materials on the Navy's property. All wastes generated as a result of continuation of the Navy's Environmental Restoration Program (formerly known as the IRP) will be managed at each parcel at a less than 90-day storage areas.

A RCRA Permit Modification was issued February 14, 2007 to remove Sites 1, 9, and 10A, since they were transferred to the Town of Riverhead. A RCRA Permit Modification was issued July 28, 2008 to select excavation and off-site disposal of source areas at Sites 6A and 10B.