



ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE

Site Summary Update – January 2002

Site Description

The Elmendorf Air Force Base (EAFB) site covers approximately 13,100 acres near Anchorage. The Air Force has identified over 35 CERCLA sites and 31 SERA (State Elmendorf Environmental Agreement) areas of possible contamination including landfills, drum storage areas, waste disposal areas, fuel spill areas, and leaking underground storage tanks (USTs). Unlined landfills have received a variety of hazardous wastes, including lead acid batteries and waste solvents. Shop wastes, solvents and paint thinners, have been disposed of in an unlined trench.

The site was added to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) National Priorities List in 1990. It has been divided into several operable units (OUs), each of which moves independently through the Superfund cleanup process.

Threats and Contaminants

Groundwater has been contaminated with lead and volatile organic compounds such as trichloroethylene, benzene, and tetrachloroethylene. Used oils, solvents, and fuel have been discharged onto the ground. Soil is contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and pesticides.

Public Health and Environmental Concerns

People may be exposed to pollutants through dermal contact or accidental ingestion of contaminated soil or water. Contaminants that may have bioaccumulated in fish and other wildlife may also pose a health threat to humans.

Response Actions

- In 1993, the Air Force removed 4,500 abandoned drums of asphalt and reused it on airport runway shoulders and taxiways.
- In 1994, the Air Force removed 29 USTs from an abandoned tank farm. The Air Force also emptied four one million-gallon tanks and began recovery of the spilled jet fuel.
- In 1996, the Air Force closed the four, one million-gallon tanks in place. The recovery system was shutdown in 1999 and subsequent monitoring has shown no significant recurrence of free product.
- In 1998, the Air Force conducted a successful removal of PCB contaminated soils from a former transformer storage area.
- In 1999, the Air Force, ADEC, US EPA conducted a 5-year review to evaluate whether the remedial actions taken at the site remain protective of human health and the environment. The remedies remain protective and no major changes were recommended as a result of the review.
- In 2001, due to more chlorinated solvents being found in an investigation in 2000, DP98 would go through a formal Remedial Investigation process under CERCLA rather than a SERA site.

Current Status

- Bioventing is being used to cleanup the soil at several CERCLA and SERA sites.

- The Air Force has continued to meet with community members on a semiannual basis in a Restoration Advisory Board forum to discuss environmental issues and concerns at the Base.