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Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP)

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# ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

for Maywood, New Jersey

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U.S. Department of Energy

116806

94-328

JUN 1 1994

Dear Citizen:

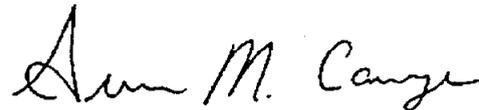
**MAYWOOD SITE - TRANSMITTAL OF 1993 ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEILLANCE REPORT FACT SHEET**

I am pleased to inform you that the 1993 environmental surveillance report for the Maywood site, located in Maywood, New Jersey, has been published and is now available. This site is managed by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) for the storage of radioactively contaminated soils. Enclosed is a fact sheet summarizing results from this year's environmental surveillance efforts.

For more information on the Maywood site, call or visit the DOE Public Information Center at 43 West Pleasant Avenue (201-843-7466). You may also call DOE's 24-hour toll-free access number at 1-800-253-9759 and leave a message. Someone will return your call promptly.

Please feel free to contact me through the Information Center with any questions that you might have on the surveillance program or any other aspect of DOE's activities in Maywood. I am always available to meet with residents individually or in groups.

Sincerely,



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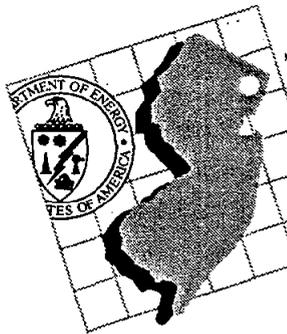
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**FUSRAP**

# Fact Sheet

## ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEILLANCE AT THE MAYWOOD INTERIM STORAGE SITE

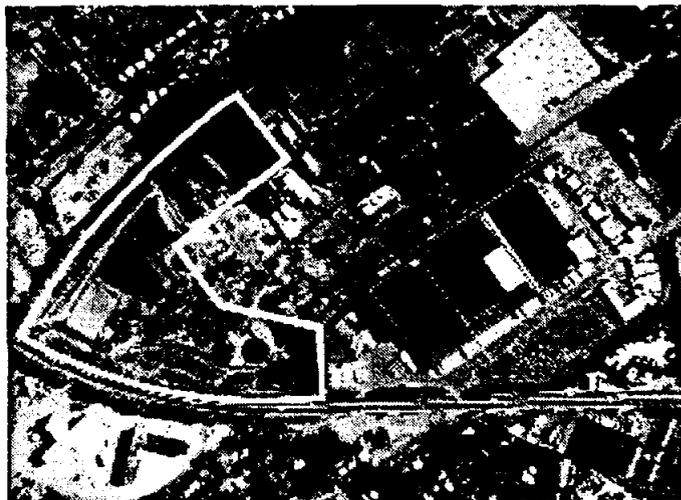
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY • FORMERLY UTILIZED SITES REMEDIAL ACTION PROGRAM • MAY 1994

*This fact sheet has been prepared to address community outreach requirements set by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Fact sheets are one part of an effort to provide public information on environmental restoration and waste management.*

The Maywood Interim Storage Site (MISS) is located at 100 West Hunter Avenue in Maywood, New Jersey. In storage at the site are approximately 35,000 cubic yards of thorium-contaminated soils and building debris. The stored materials were removed from residential and commercial properties in Maywood, Rochelle Park, and Lodi, New Jersey. The contamination resulted from thorium processing conducted at the Maywood Chemical Works between 1916 and 1959. Ponds that held wastes from the processing operations cover most of MISS. As a result, virtually all areas of MISS are radioactively contaminated.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) maintains MISS and performs environmental surveillance to ensure that the site does not adversely affect public health or the environment and that the site is in compliance with all environmental regulations.

This fact sheet explains why DOE performs environmental surveillance, what the environmental surveillance program includes at MISS, what the results have shown over the years, and how to obtain additional information.



*Aerial view of the Maywood Interim Storage Site.*

### **What is MISS, and how did it come to exist?**

In 1984, Congress authorized DOE to clean up radioactive contamination that had been discovered on various properties in Maywood and its environs. DOE assigned

the site to its Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), which was established in 1974 to clean up sites where contamination above current guidelines remains from the early years of the nation's atomic energy program, or from commercial operations causing conditions that Congress has authorized DOE to remedy.

DOE began work in the Maywood area almost immediately. Studies showed that the contamination had spread in a variety of ways to residential, commercial and industrial properties in Maywood, Rochelle Park, and Lodi. So that contaminated material could be removed as quickly as possible from some of the residential and commercial and industrial properties, DOE negotiated with the Stepan Company, which had purchased the Maywood Chemical Works in 1959, for access to approximately 12 acres of

land to use as a storage site. Between 1983 and 1985, DOE cleaned up 25 properties. The contaminated material was brought to MISS and placed in storage. The storage pile is engineered to safely hold the materials until DOE and other regulatory agencies can decide upon a method for disposing of the waste permanently. DOE developed an environmental surveillance program at MISS in 1984 and has been monitoring the site ever since.

## Why DOE conducts environmental surveillance

DOE wants to be certain that MISS does not adversely affect public health or the environment and that the site complies with all environmental laws and regulations. Such evaluations can be made only if reliable, quality data scientifically demonstrate that the site meets these objectives. The environmental surveillance program, therefore, is a program through which DOE routinely collects the environmental data needed for evaluating the site.

## The environmental surveillance process

DOE maintains environmental surveillance programs at seven FUSRAP sites. Each program is tailored specifically for the site being monitored and is developed after an evaluation of the characteristics of the site.

While each site is different, all environmental surveillance programs incorporate certain basic considerations. For example: what contaminants are present on the site? Are contaminants moving from the site? By what routes could these contaminants move? Other considerations include how often sampling should be performed and what kinds of sampling devices and laboratory analyses are best to detect or measure certain contaminants.

The surveillance program monitors all the routes that contaminants could take in moving from the site to the offsite environment—for example, in the air or water. Monitoring devices or sampling stations are located in the places where

they are most likely to detect any contamination that might escape from the site. Placement of the sampling stations is determined by factors such as wind direc-



Groundwater sampling allows DOE to detect and measure the site's effect on groundwater.

tion, site terrain, the paths water takes in flowing on and off the site, and so forth.

After an environmental surveillance program is set up, it is continuously reevaluated. Sampling stations are relocated, new ones are added and old ones are taken away—whatever is required to make sure the collected data allow for an accurate assessment of the site.

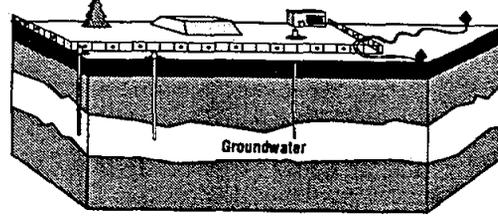
### How an environmental surveillance program works

Contaminants are selected for monitoring based on historical site records and site evaluations.

The pathways by which contaminants could move from the site to the offsite environment are identified. Potential pathways include groundwater, surface water, sediment, air, and direct radiation.

Monitoring stations are placed to detect contamination in all potential pathways.

◆ Surface water and sediment sampling location      ♣ Groundwater well      □ Air and direct radiation monitors along fence



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## Environmental surveillance at MISS

The primary contaminants at MISS are thorium, radium, uranium, and their associated decay products—such as the gases they give off. Based on these contaminants, the program at MISS monitors the air for radon and thoron gas and for external gamma radiation. Surface water, sediment, and groundwater are monitored for thorium-232, radium-226, and total uranium; surface water and sediment are also monitored for radium-228.

In addition, certain chemicals are present that might have been associated with the thorium processing conducted at the site years ago.

Therefore, the program monitors for metals and organic compounds in surface water and groundwater and for metals in sediments.

To monitor the air, DOE places detection devices at numerous locations on MISS and along the fenceline. The fenceline locations represent the closest that a member of the public could come to the contamination on the site.

The detection devices are in place 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. When a detector is removed for analysis, a new one is installed immediately to maintain constant coverage. The amount of radon, thoron, or external gamma radiation measured, therefore, represents the maximum that could be encountered by a member of the public—even if a person stood at the fence day and night, year round.

To monitor groundwater contamination at MISS, DOE uses a system of wells. Several deep and shallow wells sample the groundwater beneath the site. One well is placed in a location known to be unaffected by the site. This “background” well measures the amount of radioactive and chemical contaminants that occur in the environment around MISS. Other wells are located on the site in positions to detect any contaminants moving from the site to groundwater. By comparing the samples from the background well with the samples from the other wells at the site, DOE can detect and measure the site’s effect on groundwater.

This same “before and after” principle is applied in monitor-

ing surface water and sediment. One background sampling station checks surface water and sediment at a location unaffected by the site. Other sampling stations check surface water and sediment downstream of the site, where contamination moving from the site would be detected.

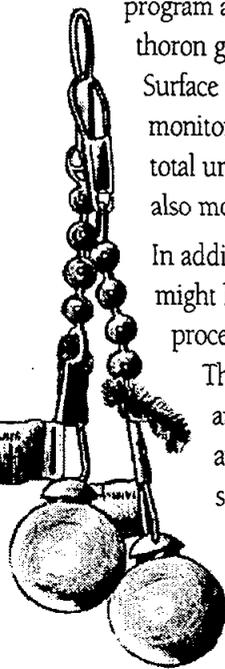
Samples are analyzed by laboratories that are required to meet strict quality control requirements. Results are reported annually in an environmental surveillance report that is available to the public. This report also describes the sampling program and contains site maps that show the sampling locations for each type of monitoring.

## Results of the MISS environmental surveillance program

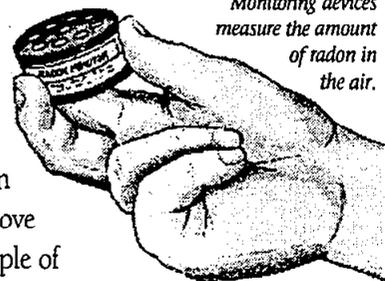
In determining whether MISS is affecting human health or the environment, DOE compares sampling results to federal and state standards and to DOE guidelines established to ensure public safety. Results are also compared to background levels of radiation and chemicals that occur in the natural environment around the site. This allows DOE to assess whether MISS is contributing levels of any contaminant above what would be measured in the surrounding environment.

### Results of radiological monitoring

Since environmental surveillance at the site began in 1984, results have consistently shown that MISS is making no significant contribution of radiation to the environment. The 1993 results of radiological monitoring again showed this to be true. The radiological dose to the total population is essentially zero. The 1993 results for radon monitoring at MISS showed that fenceline measurements were about the same as background and far below the DOE guideline of 3.0 pCi/L\* (see box on next page). Monitoring for thoron showed results that were above background but, with a couple of exceptions, far below the current DOE guideline of 3.0 pCi/L. Thoron results are above DOE's guideline on one area of the site where former processing activities took place. This area is roped off and access is controlled. Results for external radiation monitoring in 1993 showed, with



Detection devices measure the amount of gamma radiation.



Monitoring devices measure the amount of radon in the air.

\* Generally speaking, the results of radiological analyses are expressed in terms of the concentrations of radioactivity in a given amount of air, water, or sediment. The concentration is expressed in terms of picocuries of radioactivity per liter (for air or water) or per gram (for soil or sediment). A picocurie is one-trillionth of a curie.

\*\* Gamma radiation is measured in roentgen (R). Measurements most often are expressed in thousandths of roentgen, or milliroentgen (mR). Radiation absorbed by humans is expressed in rem or mrem. A gamma radiation level of 1 mR/yr is approximately equivalent to an absorbed dose of 1 mrem/yr. The guideline for radiation exposure from all sources is 100 mrem/yr above background to members of the public. Americans receive on the average 360 mrem/yr of radiation—almost all from natural and medical sources.

the exception of one area of the site, average exposure rates of 111 mR/yr\*\* (see box above) could be obtained if a person stood at the site fence line 24 hours a day for one year. In the former thorium processing area, measured gamma exposure rates ranged from 458 mR/yr to 1,586 mR/yr. By including this localized and restricted area, the site average increases to 288 mR/yr. This measurement does not include the normal background gamma exposure rate of 69 mR/yr. The DOE guideline for annual radiation exposure to the public is 100 mrem/yr\*\* above background (see box above).

The property nearest to this area is an industrial facility about 150 feet away, occupied by employees 40 hours per week. The gamma radiation levels measured at the monitoring locations would not be possible at the industrial facility and, therefore, the employees would not be exposed to those rates. The maximum exposure that employees at the facility could receive was calculated using conservative assumptions (which would tend to overestimate the possible dose). The maximum radiation dose these employees could receive from exposure to radiation at the site would be essentially zero.

Results of 1993 monitoring for thorium, radium, and uranium in groundwater showed that concentrations in some wells exceeded background. However, all concentrations were well below DOE guidelines and state and federal standards. Overall radionuclide concentrations measured in groundwater associated with MISS are low and have consistently been low since monitoring began.

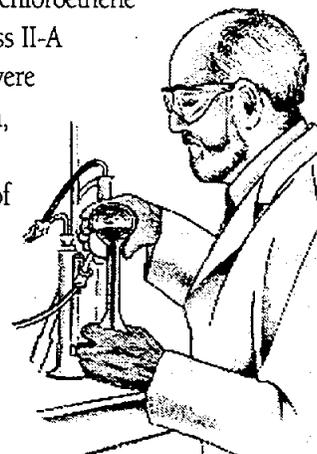
Radiological sampling of surface water and sediment yielded results that were essentially the same as background. These results are also consistent with monitoring results from

previous years, and all concentrations were below DOE guidelines and federal and state standards.

## Results of chemical monitoring

Results of chemical monitoring at the site generally showed readings that would be expected for a facility in an industrial area. In surface water samples, the only findings that were unusual for an industrial area were concentrations of lithium that were slightly above background. Sediment sampling showed levels of metals above background; however, this is not unusual in industrial locations.

Concentrations of aluminum, arsenic, chromium, iron, lead, lithium, manganese, and tetrachloroethene that exceeded New Jersey Class II-A groundwater quality criteria were detected. The presence of iron, aluminum, and manganese reflects the geologic makeup of the area and is not associated with past thorium processing operations at the site. The concentrations and distribution of arsenic, chromium, and lead appear to reflect areas of radioactively contaminated soil on the site. This groundwater is not used as a source of drinking water, and there is no credible pathway through which the public could be exposed to the contaminants.



*Samples are analyzed in laboratories that meet strict quality control requirements.*

## Where can I obtain more information?

Complete results of the MISS environmental surveillance program have been published each year since the program began in 1984. The reports can be inspected and copies obtained at the DOE Public Information Center at 43 West Pleasant Avenue in Maywood, New Jersey 07607. The telephone number is (201) 843-7466. The reports are also available for inspection in the Administrative Record file in the Maywood Public Library.

DOE also maintains a 24-hour, toll-free telephone number. An answering machine records comments or questions. The machine is checked frequently, and all calls are returned promptly. The number is 1-800-253-9759.

