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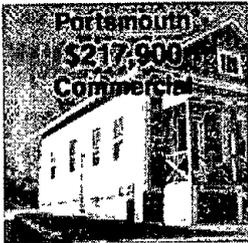
## The Newport Daily News

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### LOCAL NEWS HEADLINES

#### Cleanup to begin at site of former water tower

By Meaghan Wims/Daily News staff

The Navy this summer will excavate and truck away lead-contaminated soil from the site of its razed Melville water tower.

The cleanup is expected to be the final stage of a yearlong remediation

Last summer, contractors tore down the 100-foot-tall water tower, next to Melville School, after determining the 63-year-old tower to be structurally unsound. The Navy had spent months removing lead-based paint from the tower after school officials in the fall of 2005 determined that the paint was chipping off the tower, posing a potential health risk to students and school staff.

Soil tests since then have revealed lead concentrations of up to 1,000 parts per million at the base of where the tower stood - in some places, more than 2 feet below ground. Those samples are well beyond the state's residential standard of 150 parts per million. The lead concentrations dropped the further away the soil samples were from the tower's former base.

Now, the soil must go

Officials from the Navy, the federal Environmental Protection Agency, state health and environmental agencies and the School Department reviewed the proposed cleanup plan at a meeting Tuesday night in the school's library.

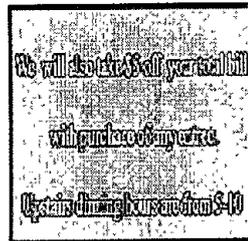
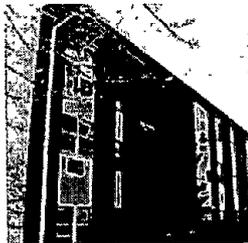
The plans are subject to public comment and must be approved by state and federal agencies. But here's what's planned

- u Work should begin by July 5 and last likely until mid-August. Officials said the work would be completed in time for the start of school in the fall.

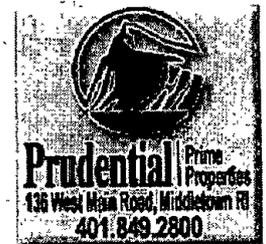
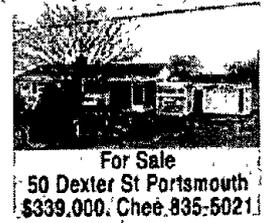
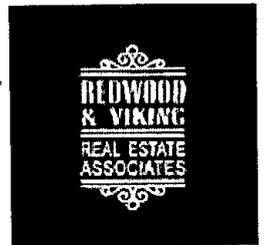
- u A construction manager, likely Tetra Tech Inc. of Wilmington, Mass., will contract with local excavation and trucking companies to remove 800 cubic yards of soil, as well as old concrete footings from the site. Some trees and brush on the south side of the site also will have to be removed.

- u Residents can expect construction noise and increased truck traffic in the area and on the Sakonnet River Bridge, with roughly eight trips daily by trucks removing soil from the site.

- u Workers will focus on controlling dust and keeping the site clean. Sprinklers will keep the soil moist to prevent lead dust from becoming airborne, and the trucks' hauls will be covered. "This is a methodical, careful excavation," said Stephen Parker, project manager for Tetra Tech



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The soil will be trucked to an as-yet-determined location for disposal and the site will be backfilled with clean soil and seeded. Eventually, the soil must meet residential safety standards for lead. The site will remain fenced off until vegetation has grown.

The nearby playground and pathway from Melville military housing will remain cordoned off.

It's unclear whether the Navy will allow Melville School to use the land once the cleanup is completed. The Navy hasn't decided on a permanent solution for providing water to residents in nearby military housing, which tied into the Portsmouth Water District during demolition of the tower.

"There are no plans to build another tower," said Cornelia Mueller, environmental scientist for Naval Station Newport.

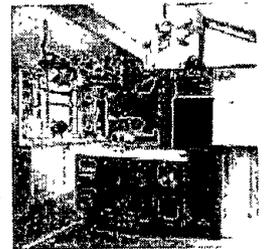
The project has been costly. Testing and removing the soil will cost about \$500,000, said James L. Colter, remedial project manager for Naval Facilities Engineering Command, based in Norfolk, Va. Colter said some projects at Naval Station Newport were delayed to make time and money available for this cleanup.

That cost is on top of the roughly \$325,000 already spent to remove paint from the tower and to raze the structure.

**Input sought**

Copies of a fact sheet on the proposed cleanup of the former water tower site near Melville School in Portsmouth can be found at the Newport, Middletown and Portsmouth public libraries.

The Navy will accept public comment on the removal action through June 1. Written comments may be sent by mail to Cornelia Mueller, Naval Station Newport, Environmental Department, 1 Simonpietri Drive, Newport, RI 02941; by fax to 841-7561, or by e-mail to [cornelia.mueller@navy.mil](mailto:cornelia.mueller@navy.mil).



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