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NEWSPAPER ARTICLE, "UNKNOWN SUBSTANCE FOUND AT FORMER LANDFILL" NSY
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YORK COUNTY

Unknown substance found at former landfill

By Larry Favinger
Staff Writer

Navy is trying to determine who's responsible for dumping it

PORTSMOUTH — Forty barrels of a thick, black, tar-like substance have been removed from the Jamaica Island Landfill at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

A shipyard spokeswoman told the Restoration Advisory Board at last night's meeting that the Navy is now determining what the substance is.

The barrels have been removed to the shipyard's hazardous waste transfer station and will

be sent off the yard for proper disposal, a yard spokesman said.

The board includes representatives from Seacoast communities, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Navy, and the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League. It advises the Navy on the environmental cleanup of Superfund sites at the shipyard.

Marty Raymond told the board

several test pits had been dug at various locations in the former landfill pinpointed by a survey done by high-tech equipment generally used to find unexploded ordinance.

The barrels were found at one of the sites, "not very far down," she said.

"They were neatly packed," Ken Plaisted, the co-chairman of the board, said.

Raymond said the barrels ap-

peared to have been placed, not thrown at random.

"We were surprised to find 40 drums at that location," Fred Evans, the remedial project manager for the Navy, said.

The barrels were found between two and six feet down, but above the water line, Raymond said.

Digging continued, she said, to about the eight-foot level when water was found, "we kept dig-

ging until we found nothing."

At other test pits, considerable pieces of waste metal were uncovered as well as one drum lid and one empty drum marked kerosene.

The Jamaica Island Landfill covers about 25 acres of former mud flats that were filled between 1945 and 1978. Items dumped there include general refuse, trash, construction rubble, incinerator ash, plating

sludges, asbestos insulation, waste oil and solvents, spent sandblaster grit and dredge spoils.

There were some symbols and numbers on the barrels. They are being studied by the shipyard historian in an effort to determine when they were put into the former landfill.

Raymond said there was nothing wet around the barrels, but some dark soil in the area was removed and is also being tested. Results are expected in about a month.

TO:
Dave Agazarian
From Marty R.