

ALLEGANY BALLISTICS LABORATORY (ABL)**SITE DESCRIPTION:**

ABL is a Government owned, contractor operated facility located in northeastern West Virginia. The facility lies between the North Branch Potomac river on the north and west and Knobly Mountain on the south and east. There are two plants at ABL; Plant one is owned by the Navy and operated by Hercules, Inc. ABL occupies approximately 1,628 acres, of which 1,572 are owned by the Department of the Navy. The ABL site has been used since 1943 primarily for research, development, and testing of solid propellant and motors for ammunition, rockets, and armaments.

An Initial Assessment Study, analogous to a Preliminary assessment, identified twenty potentially contaminated sites for further investigation. A Confirmation Study, termed the Interim Remedial Investigation, was conducted by Roy F. Weston, Inc. This study identified seven of the initial twenty sites that warrant further investigation and possible remediation.

Site One: Northern Riverside Waste disposal Area

This site is located next to the Potomac River. It has been used for waste disposal since the 1940's. Presently it is used for burning explosive contaminated waste. This may include paper, rags, and explosive products. Soil Gas samples were collected along the boundary of site one: Trichloroethene (TCE) was found all along the boundary.

Site Two: Previous Burning Ground

This is a smaller area than Site one. It was used as a burning ground for about seven years (1942-1949). It is further from the river than Site one. There are no waste disposal practices at the site today. The exact boundaries of the burning area are not known. There are a number of wells at the site. Soil gas samples were taken and nothing was found. This implies that there is no source area at the site. Site two is of minor concern.

Site Three: Previous Burning Ground

Site three has a similar history to Site two. It was a burn area from 1950 to 1958. There was no known disposal of liquid waste or debris. There were a number of wells installed and soil gas samples were taken at the site. Soil gas samples were negative. Thus, it appears that Site three is not an on-going source of contamination.

Site Four: (A&B) Photographic and X-ray development Solution Disposal Sites.

There are two areas where X-ray and photographic developing solutions

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were discharged into the ground through french drains. Site 4A has a gravel filled hole used for liquid disposal. Soil samples from site 4B showed elevated concentrations of silver. Soil samples were analyzed for EP Toxicity, and results were negative.

Site Five: Inert Landfill

This site is south of Plant two. This area was used for the disposal of construction rubble and large items including scrap from machining, grit from sandblasting, tires, and empty drums. There are three shallow wells at the site, one up-gradient and two down-gradient. Low levels of TCE were measured. More work is needed to determine if Site 5 presents a threat to the river or drinking water supplies.

Site Six: Sensitivity Test Area Surface Water Impoundment

This area is used for sensitivity tests for small gravity explosive testing. There is a pond in the area used for emergency fire protection. There was a concern that residues from the testing may have effected the pond. A number of samples were taken from the pond and were negative except for low values of explosive residue. Therefore there have been no recommendations for further testing.

Site Seven: Beryllium Landfill

This site is located off Rt. 956. It is a small hole in the ground, about five feet deep. It was used for the disposal of laboratory waste when a lab was closed out. Three test pits were dug. In doing so, two-thirds of the waste were dug out. Soils were analyzed and very little contamination was found. Mercury was greater than background in two samples. EP toxicity tests were run and were negative. Thus, there is little likelihood of contaminants moving out of the pit. Closure plans include capping and perhaps on going monitoring.

It should be noted that in a letter dated August 26, 1980, Mr. Joe Hughart of WV DNR Water Resources required Hercules, Inc. to remove the waste associated with the above landfill. The above mentioned test pits were not dug until 1986 and that 18mg/kg of Beryllium was detected in the soil samples.

An additional eighth site, the X-Range, has been identified as warranting further study. This a test firing range used to determine the thrust and torsional forces imparted to a rocket or other projectile. Rocket motor exhaust from repeated firings may have contaminated soils in the vicinity of the range.

Also it should be noted that sites 1, 2, 3, & 4, due to their proximity, were grouped together as one for the Hazard Ranking System Evaluation

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performed in 1988. A composite score of 33.9 was attributed to these sites. This exceeds the 28.5 requirement for consideration of inclusion on the National Priority List.

The Department of the Navy has indicated that a contract may be let this fiscal year, 1992, to develop a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study workplan.

A site visit was conducted by Lew Baker and Peter Costello of SIR in late October, 1991. Present were the Department of the Navy point of contact, Mr. Ken Walker, and Mr. David McBride and Mr. Stephen Mullins of Hercules, Inc.