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FACT SHEET 2 GLOSSARY FOR THE INSTALLATION RESTORATION PROGRAM AT  
NAVAL AIR STATION KEY WEST NAS KEY WEST FL  
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# Glossary for the Installation Restoration Program at Naval Air Station Key West

Naval Air Station Key West, Key West, Florida

Fact Sheet Number 2

January 1993

This fact sheet is the second in a series of information releases designed to provide information about environmental cleanup activities at Naval Air Station (NAS) Key West, Florida.

**administrative record** - A file that is maintained, and contains all the information used, by the lead agency to make its decision on the selection of a response action under CERCLA.

**aquifer** - An underground geologic formation composed of materials such as sand, soil, or gravel that can store and supply groundwater to wells and springs.

**characterization** - Sampling, monitoring, and analysis activities conducted at a site to determine the extent and nature of a release. Characterization provides the basis for acquiring the necessary technical information to develop, screen, analyze, and select appropriate cleanup techniques.

**characterization wells** - Wells drilled to collect samples of groundwater and determine whether the groundwater is contaminated. Characterization wells can also provide information on the depth of aquifers and the direction in which groundwater moves.

**cleanup** - Actions taken to remediate a release or threatened release of hazardous substances that could affect public health or the

environment. The term is often used to describe actions or phases in an environmental cleanup program.

**closure plan** - Documentation prepared to guide the cleanup, stabilization, and continued surveillance of a waste management unit or facility under RCRA.

**Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)** - A federal law passed in 1980 and modified in 1986 by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act. It created a special tax that goes into a trust fund, commonly known as Superfund, which is used by the government to investigate and clean up abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. It can also require private parties to conduct the investigation and cleanup.

**contamination** - The presence of foreign materials or chemicals in soils, sediment, water, or the air in significant concentrations.

**corrective measures implementation** - The final step in the RCRA corrective action process in which a site is cleaned up by the selected cleanup technology. It may require the site to continue to be operated or monitored for migration of contaminants.

**corrective measures study** - The second phase of the RCRA corrective action process in which cleanup alternatives are studied and selected for a contaminated site.

**drinking water standard** - Concentration limits for certain contaminants that may be present in drinking water. These standards are established by the Safe Drinking Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and some states.

**feasibility study** - The CERCLA study which follows a remedial investigation, and is used to identify, develop, evaluate, and recommend cleanup alternatives.

**geochemistry** - The study of the distribution and amounts of chemicals in underground minerals, ores, rocks, soils, and water.

**geohydrology** - The science dealing with the movement of underground water, often referred to as hydrogeology.

**groundwater** - Water beneath the earth's surface that fills pores between materials such as sand, soil, or gravel. Groundwater is a major source of water for agricultural and industrial purposes and is an important source of drinking water. Groundwater is typically found in saturated underground layers called aquifers.

**groundwater control** - Methods to control the movement of groundwater in local areas and prevent its contact with contaminated groundwater or other substances.

**groundwater pollution control** - Methods to prevent or reduce the further spread of contaminants present in the groundwater and to extract contaminated groundwater for treatment.

**groundwater remediation** - The treatment of groundwater to remove pollutants.

**Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments (HSWA) of 1984** - Amendments to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976. HSWA requires specific corrective actions under RCRA.

**hazardous waste** - A liquid, solid, or gaseous waste or combination of wastes, that because of physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may cause or pose a substantial hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed, or otherwise managed.

**hazard ranking system (HRS)** - A scoring system used to evaluate potential relative risks to public health and the environment from releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and some states use the HRS to calculate a site score (0 to 100) based on the actual or potential release of hazardous substances from a site through air, surface water, or groundwater. This score is the primary factor used to decide if a hazardous waste site should be placed on the National Priorities List.

**hydrology** - The study of the properties, movement, and effects of water found on the earth's surface, in the soil and rocks below the surface, and in the atmosphere.

**inactive waste site** - A site formerly used for the treatment, storage, or disposal of wastes.

**information repository** - A file containing current information, technical reports, and reference documents about a restoration site. The information repository is usually located in a public building that is convenient for local residents.

**installation restoration** - The process of environmental cleanup designed to ensure that risks to the environment and to human health and safety from waste sites are either eliminated or reduced to prescribed, safe levels.

**interim measure** - An immediate action taken over the short-term to address a release or threatened release of a hazardous substance.

**interim storage** - The temporary holding of wastes on or away from the site where the waste was generated when disposal space is not available.

**monitoring well** - Special wells drilled at specific locations on or off a hazardous waste or CERCLA site where groundwater can be sampled at selected depths and studied to determine the direction of groundwater flow and the types and amounts of contaminants present.

**National Priorities List** - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's list of the most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites identified for possible long-term remedial response under Superfund. The list is based primarily on the score a site receives on the hazard ranking system. The list is updated annually.

**plume** - A defined area of groundwater containing contamination that originates from a particular source such as a waste unit.

**preliminary assessment (PA)** - The process under CERCLA of collecting and reviewing available information about a known or suspected spill or release. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and states use this information to determine if the site requires further study. If further study is needed, a site inspection is undertaken.

**proposed plan** - A public participation requirement of CERCLA in which the preferred cleanup strategy, rationale for the preference, alternatives presented in the detailed analysis of the remedial investigation and feasibility study, and waivers to cleanup standards that may be proposed, are summarized for the public.

**public notice** - Both CERCLA and RCRA require that the public be notified of significant milestones in the cleanup process and allow time for the public to comment upon proposed cleanup activities. Typically, public notices are announced in local newspapers and on local radio stations.

**RCRA facility assessment (RFA)** - The first step in the corrective action process under RCRA is to perform an assessment of all available information on the site, followed by

on-site inspection of the facility.

**RCRA facility investigation (RFI)** - If the RCRA facility assessment indicates a release from a solid waste management unit has occurred, a RCRA facility investigation must be performed to characterize the nature, extent, direction, rate, movement, and concentration of the release.

**record of decision** - A public document that explains which cleanup alternative will be used at a National Priorities List site. The record of decision is based on information and technical analysis generated during the remedial investigation and feasibility study and consideration of public comments and community concerns.

**remedial action** - The actual construction or implementation phase that follows the remedial design of the selected cleanup alternative at a Superfund site.

**remedial design** - An engineering phase that follows the record of decision during which technical drawings and specifications are developed for the subsequent remedial action at a Superfund site.

**remedial investigation** - CERCLA investigative and analytical studies performed to determine the nature and extent of hazardous substance contamination.

**remediation** - Those activities performed to remove or treat hazardous waste sites or to lessen the effect of the waste present.

**responsiveness summary** - A summary of oral and written public comments received during a comment period on key documents and the Navy's or regulatory agency's responses to those comments. The responsiveness summary is a key part of the record of decision, highlighting community concerns for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's key decision makers.

**Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)** - A federal law that established a

regulatory system to track hazardous wastes from generation to disposal. The law requires safe and secure procedures to be used in treating, transporting, storing, and disposing of hazardous wastes. RCRA is designed to prevent the creation of new, uncontrolled hazardous waste sites and ensure the proper disposal of hazardous wastes.

**risk assessment** - The study and estimation of risk from a current or proposed activity. Involves estimates of the probability and consequence of an action.

**scoping** - The initial planning phase of the cleanup process, when requirements are discussed and the projects defined.

**site inspection (SI)** - A CERCLA technical phase that follows a preliminary assessment. It is designed to collect more extensive information on a site where hazardous substances have been spilled or released.

**solid waste management units** - Any unit at a RCRA site from which hazardous wastes may have migrated, irrespective of whether the unit was intended for the management of solid or hazardous waste at the time it was operated.

**Superfund** - The common name used for the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act.

**technical review committee** - A group made up of representatives from the Navy, the state of Florida, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the community. It meets periodically to review and comment on planned installation restoration activities.

**waste control** - methods to isolate wastes in place or to prevent further migration of wastes into the surrounding environment.

## For More Information

Documents related to the Navy's environmental cleanup activities will be placed in an information repository as they are released. In addition, newsletters, news releases, reports, and other site-related community relations documents will be placed at the repository.

An information repository has been established at the:

**Monroe County Public Library  
700 Fleming Street  
Key West, FL 33040  
Telephone: (305) 292-1644**

**Contact: Reference Desk  
Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday**

If you would like more information or have questions or comments, please write or call:

**Public Affairs Office (Code D1J)  
Key West Naval Air Station  
Key West, FL 33040-5000  
Telephone: (305) 293-2425**