

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Program

Frequently Asked Questions

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office**

Question: Which of the first four rounds—1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995—of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) installations are listed on the Superfund National Priority List (NPL)?

Answer: There are currently 34 BRAC installations listed on the NPL, which include the following:

EPA Region	State	BRAC Facility on the NPL	DoD Service
1	MA	FORT DEVENS	Army
1	MA	MATERIALS TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY	Army
1	MA	SOUTH WEYMOUTH NAVAL AIR STATION	Navy
1	ME	LORING AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
1	NH	PEASE AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
1	RI	DAVISVILLE NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALION CENTER	Navy
2	NJ	FORT DIX	Army
2	NY	GRIFFISS AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
2	NY	PLATTSBURGH AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
2	NY	SENECA ARMY DEPOT	Army
3	MD	FORT GEORGE G. MEADE	Army
3	PA	LETTERKENNY ARMY DEPOT (PDO AREA) *	Army
3	PA	LETTERKENNY ARMY DEPOT (SE AREA) *	Army
3	PA	NAVAL AIR DEVELOPMENT CENTER - WARMINISTER	Navy
4	FL	HOMESTEAD AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
4	FL	USN AIR STATION CECIL FIELD	Navy
4	TN	MEMPHIS DEFENSE DEPOT	Defense Logistic Agency (DLA)
5	IL	SAVANNA ARMY DEPOT ACTIVITY	Army
8	UT	OGDEN DEFENSE DEPOT	DLA
8	UT	TOOELE ARMY DEPOT (NORTH AREA)	Army
9	AZ	WILLIAMS AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
9	CA	ALAMEDA NAVAL AIR STATION	Navy
9	CA	CASTLE AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
9	CA	EL TORO MARINE CORPS AIR STATION	Navy
9	CA	FORT ORD	Army
9	CA	GEORGE AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
9	CA	MARCH AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
9	CA	MATHER AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
9	CA	MCCLELLAN AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
9	CA	MOFFETT NAVAL AIR STATION	Navy
9	CA	NORTON AIR FORCE BASE	Air Force
9	CA	SACRAMENTO ARMY DEPOT	Army
9	CA	TREASURE ISLAND NAVAL STATION-HUNTERS POINT ANNEX	Navy
10	AK	ADAK NAVAL AIR STATION	Navy
10	OR	UMATILLA ARMY DEPOT	Army

*Although there are 35 NPL facilities listed above, only 34 BRAC facilities are on the NPL. Letterkenny Army Depot, PA is one BRAC installation; however it has two areas that are listed separately on the NPL.

Question: Why is it taking so long to cleanup the first four rounds of BRAC installations?

Answer: Extensive site cleanup work is being conducted. Many areas of contamination at these installations are the result of decades of Department of Defense (DoD) use and operation. Principle types of contaminants includes: heavy metals, solvents, volatile organic compounds, and military munitions.

Many of these installations have contaminated ground water that can be extremely difficult to clean-up, in order to meet safe drinking water consumption levels, for several reasons:

- Aquifers are complex structures. Aquifers can contain cracked and fractured rocks and other geological variations. These variations can act as nooks and crannies that hold contaminants or create additional pathways for contaminants to follow. This makes removing contaminants difficult.
- Not all contaminants behave in the same way. Different contaminants act different in ground water. This makes them hard to locate and remove, complicating cleanup. Some do not mix with or dissolved readily in water. Some are heavier than water and sink to the bottom of an aquifer. Other contaminants are lighter than water and float on top, such as petroleum products like jet fuel and gasoline.
- Locating the contamination can be difficult. The ability of technology to find contaminants in ground water is limited. Samples from ground water wells do not always provide enough information about the extent of contamination.
- Technology has limitations. Treatment technologies are limited in their ability to cleanup an aquifer, even if the location of the contaminants is known. Frequently, ground water is cleaned by pumping it to the surface for treatment. After contaminants have been removed, the water is discharged back into the ground or a stream or river. Contaminants that cannot be pumped to the surface with water must be treated underground, making the cleanup more difficult, expensive, and time-consuming.

For additional information and key documents on ground water, visit EPA's web site: <http://www.epa.gov/superfund/resources/gwdocs/>

Question: What is the relationship between BRAC installations and facilities on the NPL?

Answer: A BRAC facility may or may not be on the Superfund NPL. From the previous four rounds, there are currently 34 BRAC installations on the NPL. Facilities on the NPL cover a wide range of industries and uses, and include some currently active and closed military installations. An installation's cleanup status on the NPL will not change if it will be closed under the base realignment and closure program.

Question: To ensure that cleanup remedies remain protective, what happens after a BRAC property has been cleaned up and transferred by a DoD Service?

Answer: In accordance with EPA's Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) requirements, if waste is left in place and the use of the property is restricted, then a review must be completed to determine if the remedy is protective of human health and the environment every five years.

Question: After cleanup, what types of land use restrictions may exist to prevent reuse and redevelopment on a BRAC installation?

Answer: While the cleanup of an installation incorporates the reasonable anticipated future land use, and the cleanup remedies selected to perform the cleanup are made with future land uses in mind, there may be restrictions on specific activities or what can be built at a site because contamination is left in place. Such land use restrictions are called institutional controls and are unique to each site.

Question: Should those BRAC installations that have one or both environmental indicators (human exposures or ground water migration pathways) not under control be considered to pose a hazard to the surrounding area?

Answer: No. For each BRAC installation on the NPL, all immediate threats have been addressed. It is important to note that the human exposure environmental indicator addresses both actual human exposure pathways, as well as potential exposures. The same is true for the ground water measure. Facilities are designated “not under control” until every potential exposure pathway has been addressed. For installations found in this category, one cannot assume that there are actual exposures occurring. Rather, a potential exposure pathway may need to be addressed or is in the process of being addressed (e.g., a ground water treatment or containment system is being installed, but it is not yet operational).

Question: Are BRAC sites eligible for EPA Brownfields grants?

Answer: No, BRAC sites cannot receive Brownfield grant money from EPA.