

McGuire AFB

New Jersey

EPA ID#: NJ0570024018

EPA REGION 2 Congressional District(s): 03

Burlington
Wrightstown

NPL LISTING HISTORY
Proposed Date: 7/22/1999
Final Date: 10/22/1999

Site Description

The McGuire Air Force Base site (MAFB) is an active facility that occupies more than 3,500 acres in a rural area of Burlington County, New Jersey. The base is bordered to the north by the community of Wrightstown, and to the east, south, and west by the U.S. Army's Fort Dix military installation. MAFB is located within the boundaries of the Pinelands National Reserve. The Pinelands are classified as Federal Land designated for the Protection of Natural Ecosystems. The primary source for both community and private drinking water supplies in the vicinity of the site is groundwater obtained from the various aquifers comprising the Atlantic Coastal Plain system. There are two major drainage surface water divides on site, and several streams to which surface runoff is directed. An extensive system of wetlands is found along both major surface water drainage pathways.

MAFB originated in 1937 as an adjunct to the U.S. Army Training Center and Fort Dix and functioned under the control of the U.S. Army until 1948, when jurisdiction over the facility was transferred to the U.S. Air Force. Past activities at MAFB in support of operational missions created a number of waste sources of potential environmental concern. In 1982, the U.S. Air Force completed Phase I of the Installation Restoration Program (IRP) investigation "to identify, confirm/quantify, and remediate problems caused by past management of hazardous wastes" at the base. For the purposes of Hazard Ranking System scoring, four waste sources were identified: (1) Zone 1 Landfills (comprised of Landfill Nos. 4, 5, and 6); (2) Landfill No. 2; (3) Landfill No.3; and (4) the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office. The four waste sources comprise only a portion of CERCLA eligible areas of the MAFB site. Although only four sources were scored, any CERCLA eligible areas of concern, identified or unidentified, and releases associated with those areas, comprise the site.

Site Responsibility: This site is being addressed by the Air Force, through Federal actions, with EPA oversight.

Threat and Contaminants

Hazardous substances detected by analysis of surface soil, subsurface soil, waste, leachate, groundwater, surface water/sediment samples collected from the site include volatile organic compounds, polychlorinated biphenyls, and inorganic hazardous substances. A release to surface water of nickel and mercury is documented. Sediment samples collected from wetlands immediately downstream of Landfill No. 2 contained high concentrations of nickel and mercury.

Cleanup Approach

The Air Force, EPA and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) have been meeting on a regular basis to address cleanup issues at McGuire AFB. The Air Force has used the TRIAD approach at the C-17 Hangar Area and at Landfill No. 2. The TRIAD approach consists of Systematic Planning, Dynamic Work Plans and On-site Measurement Technologies. The Air Force submitted the Site Management Plan in December 2008, and it is under EPA review.

Cleanup Progress

A draft Interagency Agreement (IAG) was prepared and transmitted to the Air Force in January 2001, by EPA. The site is participating in the Installation Restoration Program, a specially funded program established by the Department of Defense (DoD) to identify, investigate, and control the migration of hazardous contaminants at military and other DoD facilities. In August 2002, the EPA transmitted a second draft of the IAG, responding to the Air Force's comments of

October 2001.

On July 13, 2007, the EPA issued an Administrative Order (AO) under Section 7003 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984, against the Air Force at McGuire AFB. The AO is final in the form issued on July 13 and became effective on November 26. On December 7, the Air Force notified EPA by letter that the Air Force considers the AO to be invalid for reasons specified in their letters to EPA on July 18 and August 18, 2007, and that as required at an NPL site, the Air Force will continue to exercise its CERCLA responsibilities at McGuire AFB to accomplish the substantive cleanup work that EPA seeks to impose in the AO. However, this has not stopped EPA's involvement with the cleanup activities at McGuire AFB, and we are working with the Air Force on the RCRA Facility Investigation phase at the Base.

Site Repositories

McGuire AFB Library, Wrightstown, New Jersey 08641-5104. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 290 Broadway, 18th Floor, New York, New York 10007-1866.