

MILITARY WASTE CLEANUP PROJECT FACT SHEET



WHAT IS THE MILITARY WASTE CLEANUP PROJECT?

ISIS's Military Waste Cleanup Project (MilWaste) supports communities and individuals, including scientists and non-scientists, in understanding technical issues related to military environmental cleanup and restoration. From military installations in the former Soviet Union to our own Cold War legacy, harmful pollution caused by military activities exempt from most environmental laws has resulted in an unprecedented legacy of poisoned communities, people, land, water and air. It is probably the single most intractable problem of environmental contamination in the world.



(Department of Army file photo.)

THE MILITARY WASTE CLEANUP PROJECT MISSION

The mission of the MilWaste Project is to link and empower concerned citizens, scientists and non-scientists in an information sharing and exchange network that will ensure cleanup is done in an informed, effective and democratic way.

THE FORMATION OF A NATIONAL TECHNICAL EXPERTS NETWORK

A number of military installations have set up citizen advisory boards. However, many of the citizen advisory boards lack technical expertise to effectively assess and evaluate the risks to human health and safety and the environment. The formation of a linked network of scientists, non-scientists and technical experts, the National Technical Experts Network (NTEN), will support citizen advisory boards in technical information access, sharing and exchange. NTEN is part of the MilWaste national, regional and local strategy.

MILWASTE/NTEN NATIONAL FOCUS

At the National Level, MilWaste/NTEN:

- ◆ Serves the technical needs of citizens, scientists, non-scientists and technical experts involved in military toxic and nuclear waste cleanup.
- ◆ Works collaboratively with the Restoration Advisory Board Caucus, Global Green Legacy Project, Arc Ecology, Center for Public Environmental Oversight, Military Toxics Project and other public interest organizations and institutes.
- ◆ Hosts a website with an electronic bulletin board and on-line mailing list to facilitate technical assistance networking.
- ◆ Holds workshops, focus groups and forums that bring together those involved in military toxic and nuclear waste cleanup to foster information sharing and exchange of ideas and to showcase personal experiences.
- ◆ Presents new ways of applying science technology to affect better, more efficient and democratic cleanups.
- ◆ Encourages colleges and universities to become more active and involved in military cleanup.



Concerned citizen activists and context experts at a grassroots conference about military toxic waste, San Diego, CA (11/12/00).

MILWASTE/NTEN REGIONAL FOCUS

The *Northeast Federal Facilities Cleanup Workshop (NFFCW)* was convened by the MilWaste Project in 1997. The NFFCW:

- ◆ Brought together over 65 participants from all over the northeast as well as representatives from Colorado, California and Puerto Rico.
- ◆ Facilitated discussions on toxic and nuclear waste cleanup issues ranging from risk assessment to environmental justice and regulatory mandates.
- ◆ Hosted key participants, including a U.S. congressman, a state assistant attorney general and the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for Environment.
- ◆ Helped a variety of different people in useful dialogue: one regulatory official in charge of public participation called it “the best conference [he’d] ever attended;” and a skeptical activist who came to test out the first day stayed throughout the weekend and referred her chemist daughter to the MilWaste Project for advice and help, following the event.



Hampshire College professor and students sampling Cooley Brook, which flows through Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee, Massachusetts.

MILWASTE/NTEN LOCAL FOCUS

At the local level, MilWaste staff works on the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) at Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee, Massachusetts. As part of this effort, we attend RAB meetings and work with local professors and their students to research and coordinate class projects about military environmental pollution. This local experience offers us valuable insight about the practicality of our ideals and informs our regional and national goals, including building the NTEN.

Student Projects: MilWaste continues to collaborate with faculty and students of the Five Colleges (Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke and Smith Colleges and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst). This collaboration has launched a project to test the waters of Cooley Brook for contamination originating from deicing practices at Westover. Cooley Brook flows into the Chicopee Reservoir, which area residents use as a popular swimming spot.



*Westover's Jet Test Stand Area before demolition and cleanup. The site was polluted with jet fuels and solvents, threatening to contaminate adjacent wetlands.**



*Soil sampling begins, and from these tests, cleanup plans are developed (Fall 1997).**



*Based on test results and RAB recommendations, Westover's contractors excavated potentially contaminated areas behind the former Jet Test Stand due to concerns about contamination.**



*The excavated contaminated soil was removed to be treated and the pit left behind was filled with new soil. MilWaste played an important role in mediating and advising the RAB on the cleanup process (Summer/Fall 1998).**

(*Photos courtesy of Montgomery Watson.)

Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) at WARB: MilWaste helped convene the RAB at Westover. The RAB has now been effectively operating for over six years. Since its inception, MilWaste staff members have been active supporters of local citizen organizations represented on the RAB. With MilWaste assistance and guidance, citizens have had and continue to have a strong voice on the RAB. This has helped lead to successful, efficient cleanups that address the concerns of stakeholders and affected citizens.



Break-out session at a MilWaste conference: small group workshops to discuss and apply lessons learned.

MILWASTE LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

Beginning in the summer of 2001, the MilWaste Project will kick off a series of national workshops dedicated to structuring, refining and building the National Technical Experts Network (NTEN) to meet the ongoing needs of current and new members and all those involved in military waste cleanup. The first workshop will be held at Amherst College in Amherst, Massachusetts, on July 14 & 15, 2001. A special citizens' forum on July 13 will help orient and empower these participants. MilWaste:

- ◆ Promotes military waste cleanup actions that accurately and equitably address impacts to both human health and the environment.
- ◆ Continues to build the technical experts network linking citizens, scientists, non-scientists and technical experts through the NTEN electronic bulletin board.
- ◆ Creates links between citizens and colleges, universities, students and professors in the field of military cleanup to embody our vision of citizen-scientists helping communities and their own context-experts.
- ◆ Constantly updates our knowledge and technical information to meet and serve the needs of communities struggling with toxic and nuclear waste pollution.

WHAT IS ISIS?

ISIS is a non-profit science institute founded in 1992 to analyze the influences of history, politics, economics and culture and to incorporate this analysis into the study of science and technology. ISIS works to reconnect scientists with communities so that research is developed collaboratively to address such complex and pressing problems as environmental degradation, economic crises in agriculture and industry, providing effective health care, and toxic and nuclear waste disposal. With programs combining technical assistance, coalition-building, education, and original research and writing on the foundations of knowledge, ISIS is developing a new way of doing science that is open, self reflexive, democratic, and socially responsible. Science and knowledge are crucial to solving today's economic, environmental, and social problems.

The definition and solution to these problems are not simple or short-term and require the skills and perspectives of a wide range of participants. ISIS is committed to making science more open, democratic, and responsible to and inclusive of people. To that end, we aim to change the way science is defined and how knowledge is produced, acquired, and used.

We are concerned with knowledge that is value-explicit and actively works with people. Our approach/process includes community organizing, education, and research.

ISIS strives to function as an organization which reflects this philosophy.

SIGN UP NOW:

Citizen, scientist, non-scientist,
technical expert, community activist
and others...

JOIN US, BECOME A PART OF THE NTEN TODAY!

To join the NTEN mailing list or request further information, contact MilWaste Coordinator
Jeanne Stevens at (413) 559-5582. You can also sign up online at our website:
<http://isis.hampshire.edu/mil/application.html>

SIGN UP TO JOIN THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL EXPERTS NETWORK

Please fill in the following form and mail/fax it back to ISIS: 893 West St., Prescott D-1, Amherst, MA 01002.
Fax: (413) 559-5611. You can also sign up online at: <http://isis.hampshire.edu/mil/application.html> or e-mail the
information requested here to: isis@hampshire.edu.

Title (Mr., Ms., Dr., etc.): _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Occupation & Title _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Fax: (____) _____ E-mail address: _____

RAB/CAB/SSAB Member/Participant? yes no

Board Position (please check one): Community Co-Chair Installation Co-Chair

Regulatory Site Manager Installation Restoration Program Member

Concerned Citizen/Non-member Other (please specify: _____)

Installation Name: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Please describe your reasons for joining the NTEN _____
