

M-769

Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP)

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

for the Maywood Site, New Jersey



**US Army Corps
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US Army Corps
of Engineers
New York District

M-769

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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Corps to Convene Communications Working Group

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is looking for volunteers to participate on a working group to provide input on the best methods for communicating progress about soil cleanup of the Maywood Site. The Maywood Site is being cleaned up under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP).

The communications working group is being formed to consider what techniques (such as holding periodic meetings, publishing newsletters, etc.) best allow the Corps to communicate effectively with stakeholders. The duration of this task is four to six months, with the working group meeting once or twice a month. The first meeting is scheduled for late January.

Participation on the working group is open to all interested parties and area residents. People wishing to volunteer for the working group should call the FUSRAP Public Information Center at (201) 843-7466 by January 22, 1999.

The Maywood Site includes residential, municipal and commercial properties in the boroughs of Maywood and Lodi and in the Township of Rochelle Park, all in Bergen County. The sites became contaminated by waste products generated by processing operations at the former Maywood Chemical Works between 1916 and 1959.

FUSRAP was created in 1974 to clean up sites where work was performed during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s as part of the nation's early atomic energy program. Most of those contaminated sites were cleaned up under the guidelines in effect at the time, which were not as strict as today's standards in most cases. Management of FUSRAP was transferred to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from the U.S. Department of Energy in October 1997. The Corps' New York District manages cleanup operations at the Maywood Site.

For more information about the communications working group or the Maywood FUSRAP Site, please contact Sue Hopkins, Public Affairs, at (212) 264-9113.

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How Do You Want to be Informed?

Help the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers communicate about thorium cleanup activities at the Maywood Site. The New York District is convening a working group to provide input on the best methods for communicating progress about cleanup of the Maywood Site. The Maywood Site is being cleaned up under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP).

The Maywood Site includes residential, municipal and commercial properties in the boroughs of Maywood and Lodi, and in the Township of Rochelle Park, all in Bergen County.

The communications working group is being formed to consider what techniques (such as holding periodic meetings, publishing newsletters, etc.) best allow the Corps to communicate effectively with stakeholders. The duration of this task is four to six months, with the working group meeting monthly. The first meeting is scheduled for late January.

Participation on the working group is open to any and all interested parties and area residents. People wishing to volunteer for the working group should call the FUSRAP Public Information Center at (201) 843-7466.

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FUSRAP *Fact Sheet*

Communications Working Group

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers • New York District

Introduction

The Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) was initiated by the Atomic Energy Commission in 1974 to identify and clean up contaminated sites used in the early years of the nation's atomic energy program. Management of this program was transferred to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from the U.S. Department of Energy in October 1997.

The Maywood Site is being addressed under FUSRAP. The Maywood Site includes residential, municipal and commercial properties in the boroughs of Maywood and Lodi, and in the Township of Rochelle Park, all in Bergen County. The primary contaminant is thorium-232, which resulted from extraction processes involving monazite sands at the former Maywood Chemical Works between 1916 and 1959. Radiological surveys in the area performed from 1980 to 1983 revealed the presence of radioactive materials at levels above state and federal guidelines on many surrounding, or "vicinity," properties. Contaminated soil left the site primarily in two ways: 1) It was carried off site by the former Lodi Brook and 2) soil was used for fill at various properties. The site was subsequently designated for cleanup under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP).

The Maywood Site also is a Superfund Site and, as such, must comply with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act. One requirement is to keep communities informed about FUSRAP activities at the Maywood Site, through a process usually called "community relations."

Current Community Relations

Because of the myriad of issues arising from the transfer of FUSRAP, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, opted to continue the community relations activities initiated by the U.S. Department of Energy. The current community relations activities are discussed in the Community Relations Plan for the Maywood Site, which is available for review at the FUSRAP Public Information Center in Maywood.

However, in the year since FUSRAP's transfer, the Corps began to evaluate its community relations program in order to improve the effectiveness of these activities. In addition to wanting to improve its techniques for communicating with all interested parties, the Corps also decided to update the existing Community Relations Plan, which was last revised in 1995. Federal law requires that the community relations plan for a Superfund site be reviewed and updated every two to three years as necessary.

November 1998

Proposed Approach

The purpose of requiring a community relations plan is to ensure that all interested parties are kept informed about site activities and that their concerns are addressed by the responsible agency. A community relations plan outlines how the Corps will communicate with its stakeholders and interested parties.

Rather than revise the plan in a vacuum, the Corps has decided to take a community-based approach to updating the community relations plan. That is, the Corps wants to bring public and project interests into alignment, thereby ensuring that project decisions reflect community values, even as it pertains to communicating with stakeholders.

Thus, the Corps intends to convene a working group of citizens who will work with a neutral facilitator to develop recommendations on how the Corps can best communicate with stakeholders interested in the Maywood Site. The Corps has committed to carefully considering these recommendations as it develops the new Community Relations Plan for the Maywood Site.

Communications Working Group

This communications working group will be convened for one task only: considering what techniques (such as holding periodic meetings, publishing newsletters, etc.) best allow the Corps to communicate effectively with stakeholders. The duration of this task is four to six months, with the working group meeting once a month at a day and time agreed upon by the group. A facilitator will assist the working group with understanding the legal requirements governing community relations, as well as with other potential constraints, such as budgetary or technological. The group will develop a plan for accomplishing its work in time for the Corps to complete its revision of the site's Community Relations Plan.

Participation on the working group is open to all interested parties. The Corps will be advertising for people to serve in an uncompensated capacity on the working group. Also, the Corps plans to approach people who have identified themselves in the past as being interested in the Maywood Site.

The working group will not have a mission beyond making recommendations on appropriate community relations activities, nor will this new group assume any oversight or advisory roles. It is not intended to replace any other established citizens groups.

Volunteering to Participate

If you are interested in helping the Corps develop a communications program that is responsive to community concerns, please call the FUSRAP Public Information Center at **(201) 843-7466** with your name, address and telephone number. You may also call the Public Information Center if you have any questions about the mission of the communications working group.