

Corps temporarily stops work at former Tulalip Backup Ammunition Storage Depot

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SEATTLE - After evaluating debris uncovered during a removal action at the Former Tulalip Backup Ammunition Storage Depot, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers decided to temporarily halt its current field work on Aug. 24 to upgrade the level of protection to workers and the environment. The Corps plans to remobilize the week of Oct. 10.

The Corps was performing cleanup activities at this property based upon findings of chemical agent contaminated soil samples from a recent site inspection at the same property. This secured, uninhabited site of less than one quarter acre is approximately 3/4 mile west of Quil Ceda Village. Historic records indicate that past military training and storage of chemical warfare materiel occurred at this site during World War II.

The Corps decided to re-evaluate the work operation after a crew excavating contaminated soil on Aug. 15 noticed an unusual odor and one worker complained of stinging eyes. Team members found two empty damaged cylinders and broken glassware that could indicate the presence of contaminants requiring the need for a higher level of worker protection. Team members were monitored in a medical tent. No sign of contamination was found, and the four crew members were taken to a local hospital for additional observation. Doctors released all four crew members that evening.

Based on this new information, the Corps is amending the approved work plan. When work resumes, intrusive activities will be under a filtered tent structure. Any old containers or materials found will be removed and properly neutralized at another location. The Corps is taking this action to ensure maximum safety to protect the workers, public, and the environment. We anticipate this work will be completed before the end of the year.

More information is available on the Corps' Seattle District website at

http://www.nws.usace.army.mil/PublicMenu/documents/PMEM/Tulalip_BASD_fact_sheet_.doc