



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Middlesex Sampling Plant Vicinity Property Investigation Fact Sheet

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The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) New York District is conducting environmental investigation and survey activities related to the former Middlesex Sampling Plant (MSP) site located at 239 Mountain Avenue in the Borough of Middlesex, Middlesex County, New Jersey. This work is being performed under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP). The MSP was established in 1943 as part of the Manhattan Engineer District (MED) to sample, store, test, and transfer ores containing uranium, thorium, and beryllium.

Project Background

The 9.6-acre MSP is a legacy MED and U.S. Atomic Energy Commission facility that received uranium, thorium, and beryllium ores from the 1940s until 1967, at which time the facility was decontaminated to the standards in effect at the time. However, overlooked during decontamination were traces of radioactive materials that had been carried off-site over the years by wind, rain, and fill activities to nearby properties. Also, records later revealed that in 1948, some radioactively contaminated materials had been trucked from the plant to the Middlesex Municipal Landfill (MML), one-half mile away.

In the 1980s, the contaminated nearby properties (termed MSP Vicinity Properties [VPs]) were cleaned up, and the excavated soil was stored on the MSP site in a specially constructed pile, known as the Vicinity Properties (VP) pile.

A Record of Decision (ROD) was signed in 2005 specifying the criteria for the cleanup of contaminated soils related to the MSP.

Remediation of the MSP soils was completed in 2008. USACE has conducted a review of the MSP VPs previously identified by the U.S. Department of Energy to ensure they meet the criteria set in the ROD. In 2019, USACE added a new VP to the MSP. The location of this VP suggested that a wider area around the MSP be further investigated.

In 2021, USACE conducted an expanded aerial survey extending 12 square miles around the MSP Site.

Current Activities

Current evaluation of the aerial survey results indicates that there is no immediate threat to human health or the environment. This spring, USACE will be conducting follow-on ground investigations which will include work crews entering public areas to conduct visual observations, surface scans, and collect soil samples. This additional data will help to further ground truth the aerial survey results. It is important to note that USACE further investigating a property does not mean there is contamination. Elevated readings do not necessarily indicate contamination because there are many sources of naturally occurring radiologic activity in our environment that can cause elevated readings above background, such as granite stone and building materials like brick. Work conducted by USACE will help determine whether radiological levels are consistent with naturally occurring radioactive material (NORM). As with the previous USACE work at this site, this work is being conducted in coordination with both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP).



Ground surveys will be performed using handheld gamma detectors.

Project Fact Sheet

Middlesex Sampling Plant FUSRAP Site Vicinity Properties
Middlesex, New Jersey

Frequently Asked Questions About Current Activities

What will I see when work begins?

Project teams are visually inspecting and carrying radiation detection equipment with GPS locators on their backs, as well as taking pictures, collecting samples, and making notes.

Why is this work happening?

In 2021, USACE conducted an expanded aerial radiological survey to identify any additional properties potentially affected by operations at the MSP. The survey extended over 12 square miles around MSP covering properties in and around the municipalities of Bound Brook, Bridgewater, Dunellen, Green Brook, Middlesex, Piscataway, and Warren. The follow-on investigation activities being conducted this spring will collect data to further evaluate the aerial survey results and determine if any properties warrant further investigation.

How will the data be used?

It will be used in conjunction with the data collected in 2021 to identify specific properties for additional investigation.

How will we be notified?

USACE New York District will contact the owners of any properties identified for additional investigation and request access to their property for the purposes of additional sampling. The specific means for notifying the larger community is under development and may include a public meeting or series of meetings, if warranted.

How long will USACE/NAN be working?

This phase of work will be conducted in coordination with the EPA and NJDEP and will take several months to complete the field work and data evaluation. Once this effort is complete and the number of properties, if any, is determined for additional investigation, a more definitive schedule will be developed and shared with the public.

Is the public safe?

Based on the data collected to date, there is no immediate risk to anyone's health. We will continue to take appropriate actions and keep the community informed as additional data is collected and analyzed.



For more information, scan the QR code or enter the project website
<https://www.nan.usace.army.mil/Media/Fact-Sheets/Fact-Sheet-Article-View/Article/487433/fact-sheet-middlesex-sampling-plant-nj/>



An information repository with project documents has been set up at the Middlesex Public Library at 1300 Mountain Avenue in Middlesex, New Jersey.

You can also contact Kathleen Cuzzolino, USACE Project Manager, Phone: (917) 790-8330
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