



THE MEMPHIS DEPOT TENNESSEE

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD COVER SHEET

AR File Number 263

October 7, 1997

Mr. Glenn Kaden
Defense Distribution Depot Memphis
Environmental Protection and Safety Office
BEC. DDMT-DE
2163 Airways Boulevard
Memphis, TN 38114-5210

Subject: Observation comments relative to the "ATSDR" Public Health Assessment Update held on September 23, 1997 at the Defense Distribution Depot Memphis

Dear Mr. Kaden:

Being the designated Restoration Advisory Board Member to participate as an observer for this date, I consider it quite appropriate for the record to list my observations in order to stand the test of public scrutiny.

The meeting began at approximately 8:30 a.m. with a very warm and welcoming address by Mr. Michael J. Kennedy, Colonel, USMC, Commander of the Defense Distribution Depot Memphis. Colonel Kennedy indicated to the "Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry" team, that the Depot Memphis was theirs for the day to freely examine the property and records, and placed at their disposal the entire Defense Depot Memphis Environmental staff to accompany them to inspect the property, answer questions and supply records and data upon request. Colonel Kennedy further stated that the U.S. Department of Defense (Defense Logistics Agency) does not have anything to hide.

The team from "ATSDR" consisted of four male adults and I recognized there was diversity (two Caucasian and two African Americans) which I considered appropriate, because the team was well balanced in this respect.

I readily learned that this Public Health Assessment update will follow the same course as the previous "PHA" when the previous Final Health Assessment was issued in November, 1995.

In summary, the five steps are as follows:

- Site review for two days - September 23-24, 1997
- Issue a draft report
- Public hearing
- Comment period
- Issue a final Public Health Assessment report

At the conference table, the "ATSDR" team asked questions and gathered data concerning specific events like fires, explosions, chemical spills, storage of chemicals and hazardous materials, radioactive materials, soil and water test results, data both on and off site.

On three occasions, the "ATSDR" team requested specific file data for review as follows:

- Spandome Collapse - Caused by high wind resulting in structure failure.
- Plane Crash - DC3 cargo plane crashed through the roof of Whse 550, Section 4 on August 11, 1984, burning the entire section of women's military clothing. The cargo manifest indicated no hazardous material was on board this flight.
- Building S873 - Sulfuric acid spill.

Dunn Road Field - Operation Unit - 1

A very thorough inspection of Dunn Field was made during the morning hours before lunch. The "ATSDR" team examined the outflow ditch west of the area where the hazardous materials are buried. Pictures were taken of this ditch just inside the security fence. They observed the site where bauxite and fluorspar are piled. Another area of inspection was the pistol firing range.

Inspection Along Perry Road

The "ATSDR" inspection team could view the western portion of the Defense Depot property (operation units 2 and 4) from this vantage point, and see the vast open field area and how the outfall drainage runoff exits the security fence (at the point between Elliston Rd. and Cane Ave.) and flows under Perry Road to a paved ditch that runs through the residential community to the west.

Special mention was made while traveling east on Ball Road to the truck entrance gate that there are several schools and churches within the immediate vicinity of Dunn Rd., Perry Rd. and Ball Rd.

Barbecue Picnic (catered) for all "DDMT" employees

For several weeks the "DDMT" picnic was planned for one week before closure on (September 30, 1997) and it was strictly a coincidence that the "ATSDR" inspection was scheduled for the same date of the picnic. The "ATSDR" team declined the meal on the basis of impropriety, so no individual could point his finger and say that the department of defense contributed any undue influence upon the inspection process. The team went off base to the Wilson World Hotel for lunch and the meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

Afternoon Inspection of the Main Installation

The team was shown buildings where hazardous materials were stored and noted warning signs on the exterior of the buildings. The open field area along Dunn Road (where salvage material was located) was inspected, along with the drainage from this area to the north.

The open field storage area of operation unit 4 was observed, especially the drainage to the west. Also, building 835 (hazardous materials) was observed.

The inspection of operation unit 2 was inspected with a lot of emphasis upon buildings 1086 and S1089 concerning sandblasting and paint booth in relation to the abrasive used. The question was "Is it lead or metal?" The answer, black beauty. The question was "Was lead-based paint used?" The answer is yes, up until the time it was banned for use by EPA. The south end of S873 (the site of a chemical spill) was carefully observed and Building 770 maintenance shop for motor vehicles and material handling equipment was observed.

Inspection of Operation Unit 3

A very extensive review and inspection of the golf course area including "Lake Danielson" was taken. A picture was taken off the outfall ditch just inside the security fence along Ball Road, south of the golf course. A review of the motor pool area, including the fueling station, the metal shop and the carpenter shop was also taken.

One question in particular - How was Building 359 and the tall smokestack used? Answer, to burn paper that was normally required to be shredded - also, medicine and drugs when the shelf life date has expired. This practice was discontinued when the air emission permits were required and the door on the furnace was welded shut.

During the afternoon in the conference room, the presence of the pesticide "Dieldrin" in the eastern part of the main installation was discussed, more specifically, confined to operation unit 3.

An overview or generalization of the "ATSDR" Public Health Assessment update is that much emphasis was upon drainage ditches emanating from the "DDMT" property and the possibility of contaminated sediments at high levels that would be harmful to the Defense Depot community by either dermal exposure or ingestion.

Residents of the Defense Depot Memphis Community have publicly alleged that the

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presence of the Defense Depot for 55 years has contributed to the high rate of cancer within their community. The Tennessee Department of Health issued a report in May 1996 that indicated a high rate of stomach and ovarian cancer within the Defense Depot community.

I trust that the "ATSDR" Public Health Assessment update will bring a closure to health issues reported within the Depot community that will be truly acceptable by all concerned.


I was impressed by the high level of integrity that prevailed throughout the inspection of the Defense Depot property by both the "ATSDR" inspection team and all representatives of the Depot Environmental staff.

I was also impressed by the highly professional answers that Ms. Denise Cooper and Mr. Shawn Phillips of the Environmental Office gave to questions presented by the "ATSDR" inspection team. It was extraordinary.

Upon adjournment, I shook hands with members from "ATSDR" and stated it was a pleasure to meet and work with them as an observer and further stated that I accepted them for their honesty. The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.

Being a concerned citizen and also a Restoration Advisory Board member at DDMT, I consider it an honor and a privilege to have the opportunity to be an observer in this very important Public Health Assessment update process. I am,

Sincerely,



John L. Garrison, Jr.

cc: Mr. John Crelin, ATSDR/DHAC
Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry

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