



# THE MEMPHIS DEPOT TENNESSEE

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## ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD COVER SHEET

AR File Number 320

**DRAFT**  
**DEFENSE DISTRIBUTION DEPOT**  
**MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE**

**DATE:** June 18, 1998

**DHAC Lead:** Michael Grayson

**DHS Lead:** Dheila Williamson

**DHEP Lead:** Joe Maloney

**Other ATSDR Staff:** Dr. Reuben Warren (OUA); Ron Moore (RO); Christina Conyers (DHEP); and Sandra Coulberson and John Crellin (DHAC)

**SUMMARY:**

The Defense Distribution Depot Memphis Tennessee (DDMT) was a storage, supply, and maintenance facility that closed in 1997. It is located in Memphis, Tennessee in the south central part of the city. It covers 642 acres, and consisted of warehouses, storage areas, office buildings, a golf course and two small lakes, and a small housing area. ATSDR is taking several actions to address community health concerns about this facility, which is in the process of being converted to other uses.

**KEY ISSUES:**

The DDMT-Concerned Citizen's Committee (DDMT-CCC) have identified the following concerns.

- (1) The 1995 DDMT Public Health Assessment was inadequate because it failed to: (a) evaluate long-term health effects from surface water run-off, (2) identify the nature and extent of contamination at the site, (3) confirm the existence of exposure pathways including the food chain pathway, (4) determine the size and vulnerability of exposed populations, (5) form an exposure registry, and (6) perform medical monitoring and surveillance (i.e., interviewing and biological sampling of exposed persons).
- (2) In addition, the 1995 PHA was unduly influenced by the Department of Defense and comments provided for the 1995 PHA during the public comment period were not addressed.
- (3) There is an excess of cancer, strokes, heart attacks, birth defects, down's syndrome, prostate cancer, hysterectomy, and other diseases among the individuals living around the DDMT site.
- (4) Environmental racism is institutional and is embedded in the system.
- (5) What was the exposure of past employees to site contaminants?
- (6) There have been several past incidents that could have caused health problems. These included 1978 evening air releases which may have resulted in nausea and sleepless nights; 1968 evening releases which may have caused animals to die, recurring skin rashes, and burning eyes; and possible bomb casings in publicly accessible areas near Dunn and Perry Roads.

In addition to those concerns, the DDMT-CCC has expressed a general distrust of government.

**Past ATSDR Activities**

- ① 1992 - Site Scoping Visit
- ② 1994 & 1995 - Three presentations to the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) and two site visits.
- ③ 1995 - Public Health Assessment which indicated that the site was not a public health hazard.

- ④ 1996 - Health Consultation concluded that the contaminant levels identified in new sediment data were not a health hazard.
- ⑤ 1996 - Presentation to Town Meeting sponsored by city councilwoman Janet Hooks.
- ⑥ 1997 - Meetings with DDMT-CCC, presentation to RAB, and several site visits.
- ⑦ 1998 - First meeting of The Greater Memphis Environmental Justice Work Group; and three public availability sessions.

#### **ATSDR's Actions to Address Key Issues**

ATSDR has taken several actions to address the concerns and issues listed above. It agreed to: (1) revisit the 1995 Public Health Assessment; (2) review cancer mortality data gathered by the State of Tennessee; (3) review a plan for ongoing medical surveillance of residents; (4) work with the DDMT-CCC, the Region IV Health Office, Memphis Health Center, the Congress of National Black Churches, local affiliates and Shelby County/State of Tennessee health care agencies to develop a plan to pursue provision of primary care services that have an environmental health focus in the reported area; (5) conduct a review of the medical records of recent DDMT employees; and (6) design and conduct offsite sampling with the cooperation of the DDMT-Concerned Citizen's Committee and other stakeholders.

Guiding principles and themes throughout this project have been cultural awareness and sensitivity, community outreach and partnership, and public participation and inclusion within the process (i.e., environmental justice). This project has continuously provided collaborative opportunities to the community to empower them to assist in (a) planning and goal setting and (b) design and implementation of public health activities. This is exemplified by ATSDR's establishment of The Greater Memphis Environmental Justice Work Group. This group's purpose is to provide a forum where site stakeholders can review, discuss, and disseminate past and current information on the environment and human health which may adversely impact the quality of life of those living around DDMT. Six subgroups were formed at the first meeting of the work group on February 27, 1998. These were: 1) health concerns, 2) health promotion and education, 3) health care, 4) environmental issues not related to DDMT, 5) rationale for DDMT remediation, and 6) site review and update.

#### **What Activities Remain to be Completed:**

The second meeting of The Greater Memphis Environmental Justice Work Group is being planned for early to mid-August. Each subgroup is expected to provide an update of its activities. Of the six subgroups formed, four receive major input and direction from ATSDR. Two of those subgroups are providing input to ATSDR staff during the document development phase. The two subgroups will receive initial draft releases of the documents for public comment (i.e., the ATSDR/DHAC SRU and the review of mortality data by ATSDR/DHS and the Tennessee Department of Health), and assist ATSDR in soliciting comments from community members.

Following the second work group meeting and public comment period, the SRU and the review of mortality data will be finalized, and the mission of their respective subgroups (i.e., site review and update and health concerns subgroups) will be complete.

**THE TRUTH IS THE LIGHT**

# MILITARY TOXICS COMMUNITY MEETING



Protect your babies from Depot poison!

**Speak out now on key issues!**

The Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR) won't be able to help you after the Defense Depot gets off of the National Priority List (Superfund), making a fool out of the city of Memphis for accepting severely contaminated land, a plague of disease, and millions of dollars in liability.

1. Your kid's health
2. Your drinking water
3. Kid's inability to learn
4. Lack of proper medical care
5. High incidence of crime
6. Infant mortality
7. Birth defects
8. Cancer, heart attacks & strokes in black senior citizens
9. Ovarian cancer in black women

**1363 PERSON  
MEMPHIS, TN 38106**

**6:30 p.m. Friday  
9:00 a.m. Saturday**

## HAMILTON HIGH SCHOOL



**FRIDAY & SATURDAY  
MAY 29 - 30, 1998**

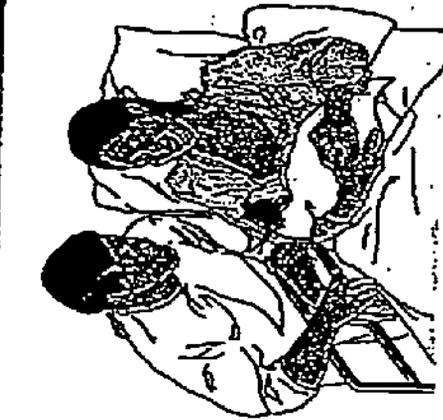


**DEFENSE DEPOT MEMPHIS TENNESSEE - CONCERNED CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE**

HUMAN HEALTH

# AIR POLLUTION

COMMUNITY CONCERNS



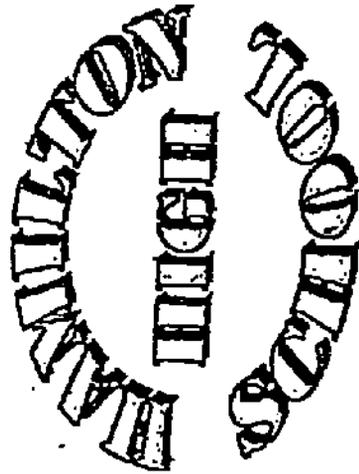
Protect your babies from Depot poisons!

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has made a FINAL Environmental Assessment of the Depot area that prevents any clean-up of the Depot's toxic poisons!

STREAK OUT NOW ON KEY ISSUES!

The Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR) won't be able to help you after the Defense Depot gets off of the National Priority List (Superfund), making a fool out of the city of Memphis for accepting severely contaminated land, a plague of disease, and millions of dollars in liability.

- 1. YOUR BIRTH DEFECTS
- 2. YOUR BREASTING BABIES
- 3. YOURS INABILITY TO BREAST
- 4. LACK OF PROPER MEDICAL CARE
- 5. HIGH INCIDENCE OF CERVIX
- 6. INFANT MORTALITY
- 7. BIRTH DEFECTS
- 8. CANCER, HEART ATTACK & STROKES
- 9. OVARIAN CANCER IN BLACK WOMEN



1363 PERSON  
 MEMPHIS, TN 38106  
 6:30 p.m. Friday  
 9:00 a.m. Saturday  
 FRIDAY & SATURDAY  
 MAY 27-28, 1998

# PROTECT BLACK CHILDREN

DEFENSE DEPOT MEMPHIS TENNESSEE - CONCERNED CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE

**Announcement of Public Availability Sessions  
USA Defense Depot - Memphis, TN**

**Purpose:** *Talk one-on-one with representatives from ATSDR regarding your concerns related to the Memphis Depot (or other environmental concerns you may have about the Greater Memphis area). We plan to collect input from the community to help guide our review of existing health data as well as gather input for the site review and update that is being conducted. You are invited to attend either of the sessions listed below.*

**When/Where:** Friday, May 29, 1998 (11:00 am - 1:00 pm)  
Ketchum Road Church of Christ  
2711 Ketchum Road  
Memphis, TN 38114

Friday, May 29, 1998 (7:00 pm - 9:00 pm)  
Hamilton High School  
1363 Person Street  
Memphis, TN 38106

Saturday, May 30, 1998 (9:00 am - 12:00 Noon)  
Hamilton High School  
1363 Person Street  
Memphis, TN 38106

**For More Info:** *Call toll-free 1-800-447-1544 (ask for Sandee Coulberson, Community Involvement). ATSDR has worked with Defense Depot Memphis Tennessee-Concerned Citizens' Committee (DDMT-CCC) in planning the public availability sessions. The DDMT-CCC is also planning additional activities prior to our sessions. You may also contact Ms. Doris Bradshaw at 901-942-0329 regarding these activities.*

*Community Group contacts include: Cain Sparks/Elliston Community Civic Club, Alcy-Ball/Nob Hill Community, Magnolia Barkdale Civic Club, Mason and Hayes Civic Club, and the DDMT-CCC*

For more information, contact:  
ATSDR at 1-800-447-1544

For immediate release: May 21, 1998

### ATSDR ANNOUNCES PUBLIC AVAILABILITY SESSIONS FOR THE MEMPHIS DEPOT SITE

(ATLANTA) – The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), a public health agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is planning several public availability sessions in Memphis, Tennessee.

ATSDR will hold these availability sessions to discuss and answer questions concerning its activities regarding the Memphis Depot site or other environmental concerns about the Greater Memphis area. The meetings will allow ATSDR to collect input from the community to help guide the agency's review of existing health data, as well as to gather input for the site review and update that is being conducted.

The meetings will be as follows:

**Friday, May 29, 1998**

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.      Ketchum Road Church of Christ  
2711 Ketchum Road  
Memphis, TN 38114

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.      Hamilton High School  
1363 Person Street  
Memphis, TN 38106

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Memphis, TN 38106

**Public Availability Sessions, Memphis Depot Site – Page 2**

Public availability sessions are not intended to be large-scale meetings. Instead, community members can drop in at any time during the session and meet one-on-one with ATSDR staff to discuss health and site concerns. Attendance is open to the public, although individual conversations with ATSDR staff will be confidential.

Community members with additional questions or those who cannot attend the meetings but would like to receive additional information should contact ATSDR Health Assessor Dr. John Crellin, toll free, at 1-800-447-1544. Callers should refer to the "Memphis Depot site" when asking to speak with a Health Assessor in the Division of Health Assessment and Consultation. The ATSDR regional representative, Benjamin Moore, also may be called for information at (404) 562-8666 in Atlanta.

Members of the press are requested to make an appointment to interview ATSDR staff. Phone Mike Groutt, ATSDR Office of Policy and External Affairs, at (404) 639-0501.

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