



# THE MEMPHIS DEPOT TENNESSEE

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## ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD COVER SHEET

AR File Number 353



U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers @  
Huntsville Center

# ENVIRONMENTAL FACT SHEET

## Defense Depot Memphis, Tennessee

### THE SITE

The Defense Depot Memphis, Tennessee (DDMT), covers 642 acres of land in Memphis, Shelby County, Tenn. Throughout its fifty-five years of operation, the site was used as a warehousing and supply distribution point for military services and some civilian agencies. Originally in 1942, the depot was operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a storage and maintenance site for the Army's engineer, chemical, and quartermaster corps. Later during World War II, the depot served as a prisoner of war camp and a supply point for the signal and ordnance corps. From 1963 through 1997, the depot functioned as a distribution center for the Defense Logistics Agency by shipping and receiving textile products, food products, electronic equipment, medical supplies, and hazardous chemical supplies. The Defense Logistics Agency closed the depot September 30, 1997 as part of the Base Closure and Realignment process. The depot is now in a caretaker status, awaiting economic redevelopment and environmental cleanup actions.

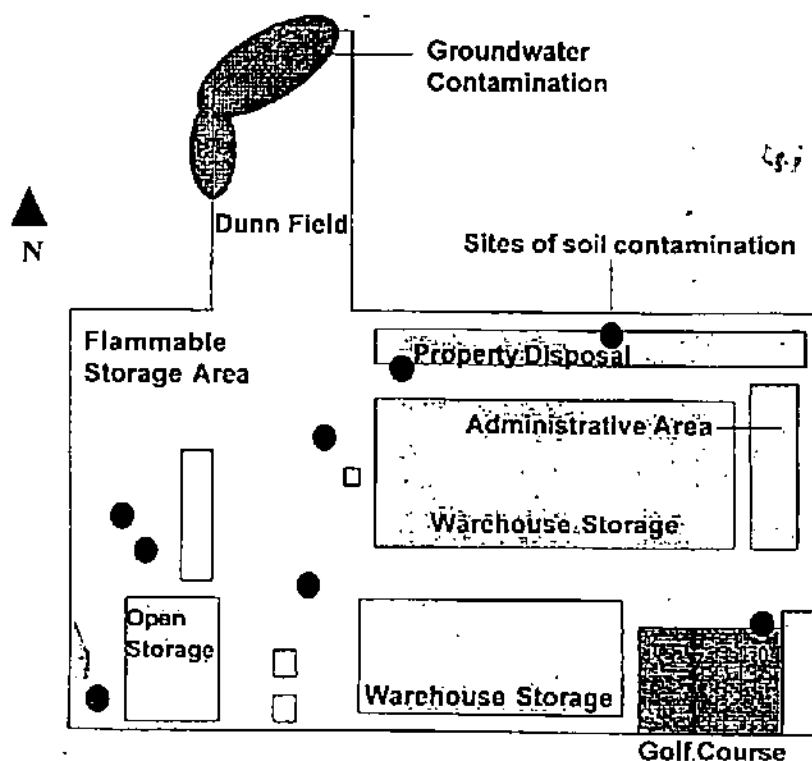
### ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION

While the DDMT site contains groundwater and soil that is contaminated with pesticides, solvents, fuels, and other hazardous compounds, health assessments have indicated that the Memphis community has not been exposed to these substances at levels that could cause health problems. A detailed evaluation of risks posed by the facility will be completed before proposing clean-up requirements.

In order to assure the public's safety and make the depot site useful for economic redevelopment, the Defense Logistics Agency and the Corps of Engineers are working on an environmental restoration of the depot itself and impacts of actions at the depot.

The Corps of Engineers conducted a two-year "remedial investigation" to determine the nature and extent of environmental hazards at the depot. The study showed that contaminants came primarily from the depot's past disposal operations and from accidental spills.

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That study was completed at the end of 1990.

Specifically, the study showed that:

- \* *A layer of water that is not used, lying about 75 feet beneath the ground surface of the depot, was contaminated with potentially hazardous compounds and metals. No depot-related contamination is present in water used for distribution to the public.*

- \* *The contamination is primarily beneath Dunn Field with a much smaller amount found under the main installation.*

- \* *The contaminants in the water beneath the depot have spread beyond the property's boundaries.*

- \* *Surface soils and surface water on the depot are contaminated in a half-dozen areas.*

The 1990 study also determined that more investigation was required to properly restore the depot's environment. So, in 1994 the Corps of Engineers continued its investigation.

## CURRENT AND PLANNED ACTIONS

Regularly scheduled groundwater sampling is taking place under the oversight of state and federal environmental regulators. This will establish groundwater trends for the entire installation. Sampling was done in June and September 1997. It will continue through 1998. The Corps has installed

monitoring wells to determine the nature and extent of the ground water contamination beneath the western end of Dunn Field.

In the meantime, the Corps has awarded a contract for a groundwater extraction system at Dunn Field in an interim effort to stop contamination from spreading and to remove the contaminants from the water beneath the field. The system is scheduled to be operational in the fall of 1998.

Soil sampling took place for the purpose of transferring and leasing depot property for economic redevelopment and to assure that no hazardous conditions will continue to exist on property used by DDMT. Sampling was done to determine the levels of contamination at sites across the depot and the preliminary results have been discussed with the Tennessee Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Protection Agency. Several sites are now leasable.

Contracts for remedial investigations/field studies at Dunn Field and the main installation were awarded to CH2M Hill in 1998. These investigations and field studies will prepare a baseline risk assessment and ultimately, a record of decision. These actions will include public review and comment periods.

Field work for these actions is scheduled for fall 1998 and winter 1999.

## SUMMARY

The Defense Logistics Agency and the Corps of Engineers take seriously their obligation to cleanup the contaminants left behind at DDMT from past practices. Several actions are underway to further examine the contamination and to reduce the amount of contamination until a overall cleanup strategy is approved.

Federal law requires that this final strategy be presented to the public as a "proposed plan" and that public concerns be addressed before defining the specific clean-up requirements in a "record of decision." The agencies are also working together so that land can safely be made available for economic redevelopment.

Environmental health scientists from the national Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry have studied the environmental circumstances at DDMT and have concluded that people living near the depot have not been exposed to contamination at levels that could cause health problems. This conclusion will be re-evaluated as part of the risk assessment process required during the site investigation.

**For More Information**

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