



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 investigations 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. 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. The ongoing site work is being performed under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), a program that is cleaning up sites with contamination resulting from the nation's early atomic energy program.

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, when 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 or rain, or removed from the site for use as fill at 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 (referred to as MSP Vicinity Properties) were cleaned up, and the excavated soil was stored on the MSP site in a specially constructed pile, known as the Vicinity Property Pile.

A Record of Decision (ROD) was signed in 2005 that specifies the criteria for the cleanup of contaminated soil related to the MSP. Cleanup of the MSP soils was completed in 2008. USACE conducted a review of the MSP Vicinity Properties 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 Vicinity Property 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

The aerial survey results show that there is no immediate threat to people's health or the environment. However, USACE will continue ground investigations this year on public and private properties. Work crews will conduct visual observations, perform surface scans, and collect soil samples.

The additional data collected will help to confirm the aerial survey results. It is important to note that USACE investigating a property does NOT mean there is contamination. Similarly, 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, such as granite stone and building materials like brick. Work conducted by USACE will help determine whether radiological levels on the properties investigated are consistent with naturally occurring radioactive material. As with the previous USACE work at this site, these investigations are 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 will visually inspect the areas, use backpack-mounted radiation detection equipment, take pictures, collect samples, and make notes.

Why is this work happening?

In 2021, USACE conducted an expanded aerial radiological survey to identify any additional properties potentially affected by previous 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. Additional investigation activities were conducted in Spring 2024 and will continue this year to collect site-specific data, including soil samples.

How will the data be used?

It will be used in conjunction with the data collected in 2021 and 2024 to further evaluate the aerial survey results and identify any specific properties that may need additional investigation.

How will we be notified?

USACE New York District will contact the owners of any properties identified for additional investigation to request access to their property for the purpose of additional sampling.

How long will USACE be working?

This phase of work is being conducted in coordination with the EPA and NJDEP and will include several months of field work and data evaluation. From this, USACE will determine the number of Vicinity Properties that need additional investigation, if any, and set a more definitive schedule for future work, which 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 people'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 Email: Kathleen.Cuzzolino@usace.army.mil