



FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES CERCLA

CERCLA Process

March 2008

What is CERCLA?

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) was passed in December 1980, in response to the discovery in the late 1970s of a large number of abandoned, leaking hazardous waste sites that posed a serious threat to both human health and the environment. CERCLA was designed to impose clean up and reporting requirements on the private sector, as well as federal facilities, by:

- Identifying those sites where releases of hazardous substances had occurred or might occur, and that posed a serious threat to human health and the environment;
- Taking appropriate action to remedy those releases; and
- Seeking those parties responsible for the environmental hazards to pay for the cleanup activities.

What Does CERCLA Do?

CERCLA authorizes cleanup responses when there is a release or threat of a release of a hazardous substance into the environment, and sets a framework for accomplishing those actions. Two types of response actions are authorized:

- Removal actions are implemented immediately, to stop, prevent, minimize, stabilize, mitigate or eliminate the release or threatened release of a contaminant to the environment.
- Remedial actions provide a more permanent solution to hazardous substance threats and generally involve a more extensive study and action period.



Munitions debris excavated near the track at Odyssey Middle School on the former Pinecastle Jeep Range, Orlando, Fla.

What is the Community Right-to-Know Act?

The Right-to-Know Act creates emergency planning, reporting, and notification requirements intended to protect the public in the event of a release of a hazardous substance. Facilities are required to report the presence of hazardous chemical substances in addition to those listed as extremely hazardous. The Right-to-Know act also includes a system of administrative, civil, and criminal penalties to enforce notification requirements imposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

For More Information

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Jacksonville District

Corporate Communication Office

toll-free 1-800-291-9413 or (904) 232-1576

www.saj.usace.army.mil