



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
Jacksonville District

# NEWS RELEASE

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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

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## **Munitions removal work concludes at Odyssey Middle School**

Jacksonville, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District announced today that cleanup work has concluded on Odyssey Middle School grounds. Corps contractors worked throughout the Thanksgiving, Christmas and Martin Luther King, Jr. holidays to complete all remaining removal work while school was closed.

“We have worked diligently to ensure that our investigation and removal work on the school grounds was completed as expeditiously and safely as possible,” said project manager Wandell Carlton. “We are very pleased to announce that removal operations are now complete and the school property has been cleared of all accessible military munitions. We are grateful to the school and the community for their patience as we worked through this process.”

Among the munitions found this weekend were 53 23-pound fragmentation bombs; ten 2.36-inch rocket warheads; two rifle grenades, 4.5-inch rockets and a spotting charge for a M38 practice bomb were recovered from the school property this week. A large wheeled target and other metal debris were also excavated and removed from the site this weekend.

The munitions will be detonated on Monday, Jan. 21, at 2 p.m. Residents in the area should expect to hear several large blasts when these munitions are blown in place. Although access to the immediate area of the detonation will be strictly controlled, the detonations pose no danger to people that live in the area.



Approximately 14 tons of metal debris and nearly 100 munitions items containing explosives have been removed from the school site since work began August of last year. The total estimated cost for all work on Odyssey Middle School grounds is about \$1 million.

A geophysical survey to identify areas where metal objects were buried beneath the ground was completed in August prior to the school's opening for the 2007-08 academic year. Also completed at that time was a complete surface sweep of the school grounds. This sweep confirmed that no munitions were present on the surface of the ground, and soil sampling confirmed that munitions constituents were not present on the school grounds. This final phase of removal work and subsequent restoration will complete all work on the Odyssey Middle School grounds, ensuring continued safety for students and school staff.

Meanwhile, work began in the Tivoli Gardens subdivision, with additional work set for a portion of the Warwick subdivision and on the Mockingbird LLC property adjacent to the school. A phased approach will prioritize and address the areas that pose the greatest potential risk to public safety. The remainder of the former Pinecastle Jeep Range site will be addressed with a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study, beginning in 2008. As part of that effort, additional soil samples will be taken on the school grounds in areas where removals took place to further verify that there are no residual chemical hazards.

Safety is always the Corps' top priority. Should anyone encounter or suspect he or she has encountered munitions, it is vitally important that they follow the simple "3 Rs" of munitions safety: **Recognize** the item may be dangerous; **Retreat** and do not touch it; **Report** its location to the local Sheriff's Office immediately.

On behalf of the Department of Defense, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers cleans up sites that were formerly used by the military. In 1943, the U.S. government leased 12,483 acres of land in



Orlando (Orange County) as an off-post site of the Pinecastle Army Airfield, for use as a gunnery and demonstration range. The site was declared surplus property and all leases were terminated on Dec. 4, 1947.

For more information about the former Pinecastle Jeep Range, please visit our web site at [www.saj.usace.army.mil](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil) and click on the Pinecastle Jeep Range link or contact the Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-1576.

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