



# Environmental Action UPDATE

A Quarterly Newsletter about the McClellan AFB Restoration Program

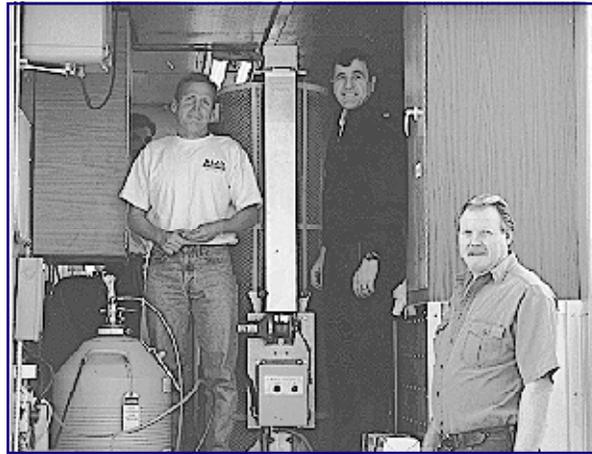
January 1997

## U.S. EPA Completes Radiation Survey at McClellan Air Force Base

To ensure that McClellan AFB is free of any radioactive contamination as the base moves toward closure, last October the U. S. EPA was requested to conduct a scan of the entire base for radioactivity. Concerns about radiation at McClellan AFB first surfaced two years ago, when drums bearing radioactive waste labels were found in an old disposal pit on the western side of the base (see "Phase 2 Field Work Complete in CS 10," page 2). Concerns from the community and

reuse interests prompted the U. S. EPA to bring their mobile scanning unit to McClellan AFB.

The mobile unit is a van equipped with several radiation sensors. The van is driven slowly (about 7–12 mph) next to the ground to be scanned while sensors register any radiation. By using more than one sensor, experts can identify the type of radiation being registered.



*From left to right: George McAlister, McClellan Tech Ops Division (in van); Scott Faller, U.S. EPA; Major Robert Senchy, McClellan Bioenvironmental Eng.; and Roger Shura, U.S. EPA with EPA van scanning equipment used to detect radiation levels.*

hangars, runways, and taxiway and flight line areas. This operation took four days to complete.

The results, which were released on November 22, indicate that most of McClellan AFB is free of radioactive contamination. Two previously known exceptions are Confirmed Site (CS) 10, a known burial pit, and Building 252, which was a radium paint shop. Three additional small sites were discovered during the scan. The site

with the highest reading, in the southern portion of the base near an abandoned building pad, is well below levels that cause a health concern. Even so, the dirt was quickly removed from the area, decreasing the readings by 90 percent. Another site was just north of the northwest taxiway, and the third was the large green incinerator located near the intersection of Bailey and Dudley Loop.

Community members had voiced concerns about a particular area—pads where, in the 1950s, aircraft that had flown through radioactive clouds were washed down. However, a careful scan of the area revealed no evidence of residual radioactive material. A summary report is available for review at the Administrative Record—Bldg. 269D, McClellan AFB; or you may call Major Robert Senchy at 643-0830 x154, for more information. 

### On the Inside

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The U.S. EPA crew surveyed both sides of all streets and travel ways on McClellan AFB. Structures scanned included buildings, storage areas, fields, ditches,



## Phase 2 Field Work Complete in CS 10

Last month, crews completed the field portion of the Phase 2 Remedial Investigation in the northern part of Operable Unit C (OU C). This part of OU C includes Confirmed Site (CS) 10, the disposal pit where a drum bearing a radioactive waste label had been uncovered and low-level radium-226 contamination was found in the surface soil.

Last month's investigation was to determine whether the subsurface soil in CS 10 is contaminated with radioactive waste. Borings were drilled through the landfill material and scanned with a sodium-iodide probe, which will detect gamma radiation. All adequate measures were taken to protect the health and safety of the sampling crews.

In October 1995, the drums were removed. The drum with the radioactive label was opened and inventoried to determine whether any radioactive waste was in the drum. However, no radioactivity greater than naturally occurring background radiation was detected.

After all the data are analyzed, the results of this investigation will be included in the Remedial Investigation Characterization Summary (RICS) for OU C. The draft report will be submitted to the regulatory agencies in May 1997. Preliminary results suggest that the radioactivity is limited to the area where the drums were first reported. 

## Operable Unit (OU) A—Field Sampling Completed

The completion of Phase 2 Field Sampling is a milestone marking the end of the investigative efforts in Operable Unit (OU) A. With data collected during this investigation, experts will characterize the nature and extent of contamination in the soils, and determine how far any contaminated groundwater has migrated. This characterization will eventually help McClellan AFB, regulatory agencies, and community members decide on the best course of action to clean up the areas where contamination was identified.

samples of soil, air within the soil, and groundwater. The Phase 1 data were analyzed and information gaps were identified. Phase 2 sampling results will help close those data gaps.

Before environmental contamination can be cleaned up, the extent and type of contamination must be known. A Remedial Investigation (RI) is the step in the cleanup process that discovers the contamination present, allowing the base to decide how to clean up the area. Two important steps in the RI were Phase 1 (general) and Phase 2 (detailed) sampling. The most information was gathered in Phase 1. Between 1992 and 1995, technicians went out to OU A and took

Operable Unit A is located in the southeastern portion of the base and is the heart of the base's industrial operation complexes and office buildings. OU A is divided into 22 smaller manageable units called Investigation Clusters that contain all of the 123 Sites, Study Areas, and Potential Release Locations. One additional site from neighboring OU H was added into the investigation of OU A, to expedite the data collection at the site. The OU A Remedial Investigation Site Characterization Summary (RICS) is scheduled to be completed in November 1998.



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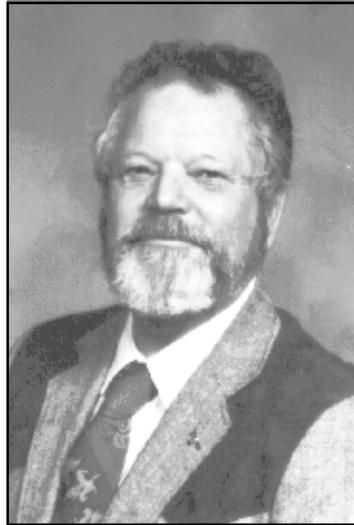
The *Environmental Action Update* is a publication of the Environmental Public Affairs Office at McClellan AFB, Calif., designed to keep the public informed of environmental activities at the base. For questions, comments, or to be added to the mailing list, please write to SM-ALC/PAE, 5050 Dudley Blvd., Suite 3, McClellan AFB, CA 95625-1389 or phone (916) 643-1742, ext. 354.

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## RAB Member Profile—Mr. Del Callaway

Recently, the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) gave the RAB the option of having a representative on the LRA's Planning Team. Del Callaway, the RAB Reuse Committee Chair, was selected by the RAB to fill that slot. His membership on the Planning Team has benefitted the community and RAB members by providing a liaison between the RAB and county decision makers who are shaping McClellan's future. "I can offer knowledge of the community and Installation Restoration Program (IRP) to the Planning Team," Mr.



Callaway said. In return, he brings topics of concern to the RAB that relate to the IRP. In addition to these responsibilities, Mr. Callaway regularly participates in the BRAC Cleanup Team meetings and is a member of each of the three other committees of the RAB. He

is able to provide input on reuse decisions from both the community and environmental perspectives.

Mr. Callaway has been a community member and employee at McClellan AFB since 1985. His interest in the IRP began when he joined the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) Community Assessment Panel in 1993. Mr. Callaway explained that he "worked with ATSDR to develop community study areas used for the health assessment, to determine if any

adverse health impacts could be attributed to contamination at McClellan AFB." He saw the ATSDR study through and continued to participate in just about every other issue of concern to McClellan's surrounding community. 

## Suggested Reading

*IC 23 Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA).*

The EE/CA evaluates conditions at a site to determine if a particular technology is applicable, in this case, soil vapor extraction (SVE). A public comment period is ongoing through January 24th.

*1996 BRAC Cleanup Plan (BCP).* The BCP gives a comprehensive snapshot of the status of the restoration program, as it relates to closure. The BCP was completed in November 1996.

*1996 Community Relations Plan (CRP).* The CRP outlines the program for fostering two-way communication between McClellan and the public. It also gives the history of community relations activities and of the restoration program as a whole.

*1996 EPA Summary Report: Gamma Ray Scan of McClellan AFB.* A summary report of the U.S.

EPA's project to use a specially equipped van to scan McClellan AFB for traces of radioactive materials.

All four documents are available through the Administrative Record on base and at the Information Repository at the Rio Linda Community Center. Also, the BCP and CRP are available over the Internet. Set your Web browser (such as Netscape, Microsoft Explorer, or the web browser from America Online) to:

<http://www.mcclellan.af.mil>

This is the McClellan AFB home page. Click on [McClellan AFB Organizational Pages](#), then on [Environmental Management](#). This will bring you to the Environmental Management home page. Click on the document you want. From here, you can either read or download the entire document! 

# Meeting Announcement

McClellan AFB  
RESTORATION ADVISORY  
BOARD MEETING  
January 22, 1997

*See insert for Agenda.*

## Environmental Management Remedial Scoreboard

As of: **January 1, 1997**

Pounds of Contamination  
Removed from Soil and Water:

**473,000**

MCURDATE P106 - 12/6/96 - JH - SAC

## Broken Pipe at Soil Vapor Extraction System Causes Spill at McClellan

On October 18, a mechanical failure on a water recirculation line of a soil vapor extraction system near Building 351 on the southwest portion of the base caused a minor spill. The system, located at Investigation Cluster (IC) 31, automatically shut off, and the water was immediately cleaned up. Three base employees who inadvertently walked through the mist and spray from the pressurized line were offered complete medical evaluations at the time and were found to have no adverse health effects.

The California Environmental Protection Agency, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and Department of Toxic Substances Control were notified. 

### Environmental Action

## UPDATE

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