

# The Environmental Cleanup of Marine Corps Air Station Tustin

December 1995

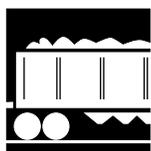
Tustin, California

No. 4



## It's Official: Excavation and Treatment of Contaminated Soil Is Under Way

The excavation and treatment of contaminated soil from Underground Storage Tank Area 22 and from Aboveground Storage Tank Area 169/170 at MCAS Tustin got under way early this fall (see Figure 1 on the next page). The project, which is expected to take 12 to 18 months, is designed to both remove sources of petroleum contamination and maximize the reuse potential of the area.



The fuel-contaminated soil is now being processed through a medium-temperature thermal desorption unit located near the center of the base.

Since early October 1995, soil has been transported to the treatment unit and heated to vaporize out the contaminants. Vapors are captured in a self-contained air system and the treated soil is returned to the original excavation area to be used as fill. The thermal desorption process has been used successfully at numerous locations throughout California to remove soil contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons.

The contractor, OHM Remediation Services Corporation of Irvine, says that by the time the project is finished it will have transported more than 75,000 tons of contaminated soil to the thermal desorption unit area. The unit treats an average of 300 tons per day and, as of mid-December, had already successfully treated more than 11,000 tons. The Monday-through-Friday thermal desorption operation has now been expanded to seven days a week.

Base Realignment and Closure Environmental Coordinator Desire Chandler emphasized that work in the excavation area, which is adjacent to the Tustin Villas base housing complex, is adhering to all federal and state safety and health regulations in order to minimize potential disruption to the community. In an effort to conserve resources, groundwater that collects as a

result of the soil excavation process is being pumped out, treated with a granular-activated carbon system, and reused as a fine water spray to suppress dust and vapors. Recycling the more than 450,000 gallons of water a month will save thousands of dollars, Chandler points out.

She adds that a health and safety officer is present during the excavation operation to monitor air quality and to ensure that all work is performed well within established standards. A chain-link fence now encloses the excavation area, and fencing has also been added to the masonry wall behind the base housing area to provide an extra level of security.

Other aspects of the soil excavation and treatment process have been approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the California State Environmental Protection Agency's Department of Toxic Substances Control, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District. In addition, the work plans for the project were reviewed by MCAS Tustin's community-based Restoration Advisory Board.

**This is the fourth fact sheet in a series of communications issued during the environmental investigation and cleanup process at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Tustin. Future fact sheets will provide further updates and will inform you of opportunities for public involvement. Watch for additional progress reports that will detail these environmental activities and explain their importance in preparing MCAS Tustin for reuse and transfer to the public.**

# MCAS Tustin's Building 248 is Certified for Closure

The closing of MCAS Tustin's Building 248 this summer was carried out under provisions of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). The building, located just off Moffett Drive near the center of the base, is shown in Figure 1.

In general, RCRA requires that structures and facilities in which hazardous wastes were stored obtain a permit from the State of California for this use. When a permitted facility is closed down, it must first be cleansed of potential contamination.

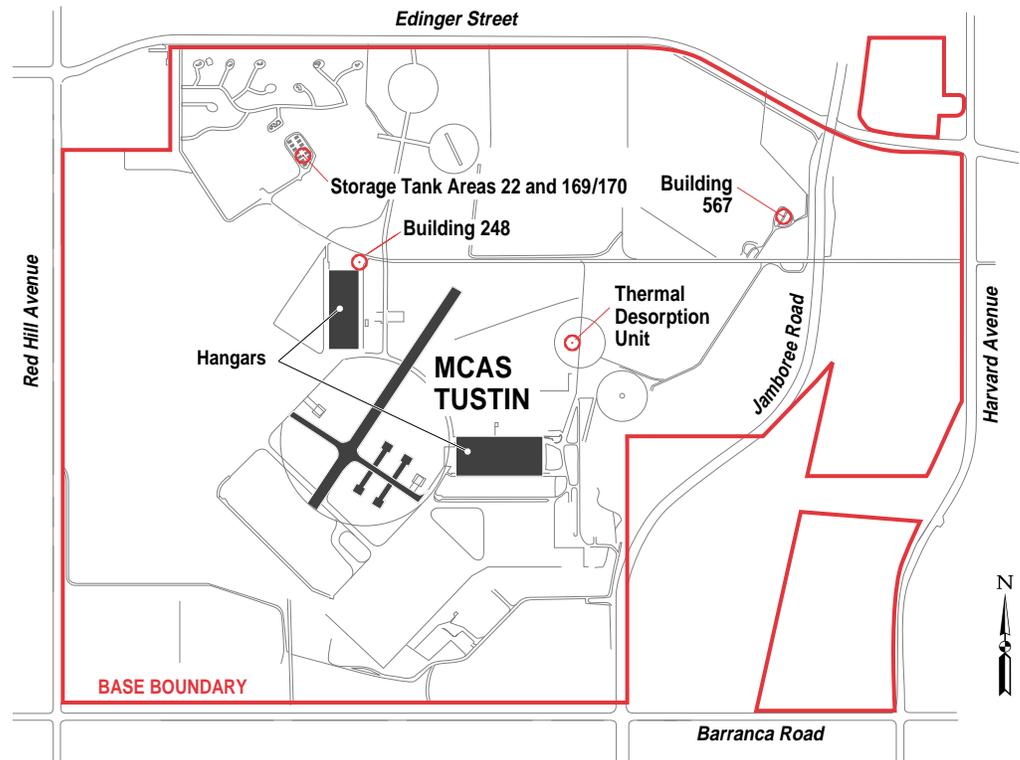


Figure 1. Shown are the storage tank areas from which contaminated soil is being transported, as well as the location where the thermal desorption unit is operating. Also indicated is Building 248, which was closed under RCRA provisions, and Building 567 where wastes are now stored.

Building 248 falls under RCRA's provisions, since it was used as a State of California-permitted hazardous waste storage building from May 1992 to July 1993. At the later date, the hazardous materials were transferred to State-permitted Building 567 (shown in Figure 1) because Building 248 did not meet the California Building Code's seismic standards as a storage facility.

Building 248 stored hazardous waste such as oil, gasoline, cleaning compounds, paints, fuel filters, old batteries, nitric acid, and lead-based paints. These hazardous wastes, generated by day-to-day base operations, were accumulated in small containers and then transferred to Building 248. At this centralized storage building, wastes were consolidated into larger containers to increase the suitability for recycling and to reduce transportation and disposal costs.

OHM Remediation Services carried out the decontamination and closure of the building during June and July 1995 under a contract awarded by the Naval Facilities Engineering Command's Southwest Division. Follow-

ing basewide safety and health procedures, OHM workers:

- used dry vacuuming, scrubbing, and pressure washing to clean the building's floors and walls;
- collected and analyzed wash water and soil samples to ensure that contaminants were reduced to levels acceptable to the State of California following the cleaning; and
- disposed of solid wastes and water generated by the cleaning process at an off-base waste disposal facility.

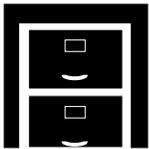
The cleanup was carried out under the guidance of the California State Environmental Protection Agency's Department of Toxic Substances Control, as well as the MCAS Tustin Environment and Safety Department. Ongoing base activities that generate additional waste material are regulated by RCRA, and such wastes are stored in Building 567.

## Restoration Advisory Board Views Thermal Desorption Unit

Members of MCAS Tustin's Restoration Advisory Board gathered in July and again in November for a first-hand look at the thermal desorption unit as it was being prepared to treat contaminated soil from the base's former fuel farm and an underground storage tank area.

Participants started out by viewing a videotape of the tank removal activities that were completed at the site in 1991. The groups then visited the soil excavation area where they were provided a brief overview of activities. Four participants moved on to an area near the center of the base for an inspection of the thermal desorption unit (see Figure 1) where their questions regarding the unit's design and operation were answered.

## Information Repository

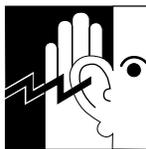


Reports, documents, and fact sheets about the environmental restoration efforts at MCAS Tustin are available for public review at the information repository.

University of California, Irvine  
Main Library  
Government Publications Department  
Contact: Yvonne Wilson  
(714) 824-7362  
or 824-6836 for library hours.

## For Additional Information

The Marine Corps/Navy encourages community involvement in the decision-making process for the environmental restoration program at MCAS Tustin. If you have any questions or concerns about environmental activities at MCAS Tustin, please feel free to contact any of the following project representatives:



## Advisory Board Subcommittees Up and Running

The Restoration Advisory Board has recently established several new subcommittees to review documents and plans for a variety of activities relating to the Installation Restoration Program at the base. Each of the subcommittees will focus on a different topic, the subjects being:

- Community Relations Plan
- Moffett Trenches (IRP-1) Remedial Alternatives
- Abandoned Agricultural Well Closure
- Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Cleanup Plan
- Parcel-Specific Environmental Baseline Survey, and
- Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Facilities Assessments

If you would like to become involved in any of these subcommittees or wish further information about the board's activities, contact Joey Tucker, the board's community co-chair, at (714) 975-4989.

The MCAS Tustin Restoration Advisory Board meets bimonthly. The next scheduled meeting is on Wednesday, January 17, at the Tustin Senior Center.

If you would like to receive an agenda and minutes of the meetings, please contact one of the project staff listed below.

### Ms. Charly Wiemert

Community Point-of-Contact, MCAS Tustin  
(714) 726-2840

### Captain Brad Bartelt

BRAC Public Affairs Officer  
Marine Corps Air Bases, Western Area  
(714) 726-3853

### Ms. Marsha Mingay

Public Participation Specialist  
California State Environmental Protection Agency  
(310) 590-4881

## MAILING COUPON

- I would like to be added to the MCAS Tustin environmental restoration program mailing list.
- I would like to receive information on Restoration Advisory Board membership.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation (*optional*) \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Commanding General, Attn: Ms. Charly Wiemert, AC/S, Environmental (1AU), MCAS El Toro,  
P.O. Box 95001, Santa Ana, CA 92709-5001

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Commanding General,  
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