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## Plan to clean up

The Boston Globe

### Superfund site in W. Concord moving forward

By Davis Bushnell, Globe Correspondent | July 18, 2004

A plan to explore the range of contaminants on the Starmet Corp. Superfund site in West Concord is expected to be approved next month. If that happens, then the first phase of the investigative work will get underway in September, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency.

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The 46-acre property off Route 62 went on the agency's Superfund list in June 2001.

A public meeting will be held in Concord some time after Labor Day on the field work plan now being refined by a Connecticut firm, de maximis Inc., said Melissa Taylor, the EPA's remedial project manager charged with the Starmet property cleanup.

On Wednesday, EPA officials will review a work plan draft, Taylor said, with members of two Concord groups, the 2229 Main St. Committee and Citizens Research and Environmental Watch. The latter has a \$50,000 technical assistance grant

from the EPA.

Also in September, the state Department of Environmental Protection is planning to solicit proposals for the removal of more than 3,700 barrels of depleted uranium that are now being stored in Starmet buildings. A contractor is likely to be selected in November, said department spokesman Joseph Ferson, adding that the project probably will get started next January.

The department had hoped to pick a contractor in the spring or summer, but the complexity of drawing up a request for proposals has altered the timetable, Ferson said. The Army has agreed to pay for the removal of the barrels containing low levels of radioactive material.

In the 1970s, 1980s, and late 1990s, Starmet's predecessor company, Nuclear Metals Inc.,

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made uranium-tipped bullets for the Army.

In June 2003, the EPA cited the Army, US Department of Energy, and three companies for being responsible for the property's contamination. The companies are: Whittaker Corp. of Simi Valley, Calif.; Textron Inc. of Providence; and MONY Life Insurance Co. of New York City.

The delay in naming a contractor to get rid of the barrels of depleted uranium will have no bearing on the work plan now being fine-tuned, said Bruce Thompson, project coordinator for de maximis Inc. The Weatogue, Conn.-based firm is handling the field work for the five responsible parties. The total tab for this work is \$8 million, Thompson said.

The barrel-removal process is an important component of the investigative work, "but we can plug that into the plan when the timing is right," he said. The barrels are being guarded around the clock at Starmet's expense.

The most important consideration is that the environmental protection department is giving "top priority to the final disposal of those barrels," said Anne Shapiro, the Concord Board of Selectmen's liaison to the town's 2229 Main St. Committee, which is monitoring activities at the Starmet site.

Meantime, de maximis, which has drafted a 2,000-page work plan, is gearing up for more than 100 days of drilling on the Starmet property, Thompson said, adding that most of this sampling work will be done in the fall.

The second sampling phase will be done next spring, based on the results of the soil and water samples this fall, he said. Then a risk assessment process could begin next summer, followed by a remedial plan for the site, now targeted for 2008 or 2009.

However, everything depends on the "extent of contamination that's revealed," said Judith Scotnicki, of Concord, a founder of the Citizens Research and Environmental Watch group. "It may be that there are other areas" of the property that have to be explored.

The group's technical assistance coordinator, James West, said, however, that "what's being proposed so far is a comprehensive investigation, one that will surely uncover the contaminants that are there."

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