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SUPERFUND CLEANUP MOVES AHEAD

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Following its completion of a \$1.5 million temporary cleanup of **Starmet** Corp.'s site in Concord, the US Environmental Protection Agency is primed to deal further with parties responsible for the property's contamination and to conduct final engineering evaluations for remaining work, according to Melissa Taylor, a remedial project manager for the EPA.

Starmet's 46-acre site in West Concord went on the EPA's Superfund list in June 2001. The company's predecessor, **Nuclear Metals Inc.**, made uranium-tipped bullets for the Army in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Besides the Army, other responsible parties identified by the EPA are the US Department of Energy; Whittaker Corp. of Simi Valley, Calif.; Textron Inc. of Providence; and MONY Life Inc. of New York. Whittaker, Textron, and MONY are former owners of the West Concord property.

Meanwhile, the state Department of Public Health recently notified **Starmet** that it is modifying the company's license to possess, make, and distribute depleted uranium. **Starmet** may only possess uranium, while it looks to decommission the site and dispose of additional products, said Roseanne Pawelec, a DPH spokeswoman.

And the state attorney general's office is continuing to press **Starmet** to get rid of remaining barrels of uranium waste, based on a partial summary judgment against the company by Suffolk Superior Court, said Sarah Nathan, spokeswoman for the attorney general's office.

Starmet currently is making specialty-metal products in West Concord, Nathan said. **Starmet** president Robert Quinn could not be reached for comment.

In its temporary cleanup work, the EPA sealed the site's holding basin and landfill, removing 23 drums and other containers, weighing 15 1/2 tons, that were filled with beryllium, lead, and radioactive material.

A radioactive sampling is now being analyzed by an EPA laboratory in Alabama, said Tom Hatzopoulos, an on-scene coordinator who handles short-term site cleanups for the agency.

An engineering evaluation will determine how many additional drums of hazardous materials are on the property, Taylor said, adding, "We believe there are at least 100 [drums] in one area."

The site's holding basin also will be examined further "since there still could be contaminated soil under the basin's liner," she said.

Once these findings have been confirmed, feasibility studies will be made "for the total cleanup of the site," Taylor said. After that, a legal document will be issued, citing costs and final remediation processes, she said.

How cleanup costs will be divvied up among responsible parties is yet to be determined, she said. The Army has contributed \$6.6 million to the holding basin's cleanup. In June 2001, it rejected a **Starmet** claim for \$50 million in cleanup costs.

The site evaluations and feasibility studies will probably take from three to five years to complete, Taylor said.

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