

NPL Site Narrative for Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Plant

NAVAL WEAPONS INDUSTRIAL RESERVE PLANT Bedford, Massachusetts

The Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Plant (NWIRP) is located on Hartwell Road in Bedford, Middlesex County, Massachusetts. The 46-acre facility is part of a larger industrial complex located immediately north of Hanscom Air Force Base. NWIRP and Raytheon Missile Systems Division (RMSD), which is also located within the industrial complex, are operated by Raytheon Co.

NWIRP was created in 1952 and operations continue at the facility today. NWIRP is used for advanced technology research in weapons systems development; primarily the design, fabrication, and testing of prototype equipment such as missile guidance and control systems. The Components Laboratory, located on Hartwell's Hill on the north side of Hartwell Road, and the Flight Test Facility, on the lower, south side of Hartwell Road, are the primary operating areas at NWIRP. Approximately 21 other buildings house various support activities related to the work at these two centers.

The Navy has conducted several investigations of the NWIRP facility. An Initial Assessment Study (IAS) was completed by the Department of Defense in April 1986. The IAS identified potential sources and areas of concern at the NWIRP facility. In 1990, the Navy completed the first phase of a remedial investigation (RI) that further evaluated the potential sources of contamination at NWIRP.

NWIRP has generated or stored wastes at numerous locations throughout its operational history. Hazardous waste disposal was accomplished either through direct discharge to the septic system or through barrel storage and offsite disposal. The septic system consisted of onsite leaching fields until 1980, when municipal sewer lines were constructed. Wastes generated at the NWIRP include trichlorethylene, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, methyl ethyl ketone, acetone, toluene, xylene, photographic fixer, waste oil and coolants, lacquer thinner, unspecified solvents and thinners, Stoddard solvent, waste paint, and chromic, sulfuric, nitric, hydrochloric and phosphoric acids.

The Hartwell Road Well Field, part of the municipal water supply for the Town of Bedford, is located less than 0.5 miles northwest of NWIRP. The three wells in this field were closed in 1984 after volatile organic compound contamination was traced to two of the wells. A 1991 RI report prepared by the Town of Bedford concluded that NWIRP was a likely source of the well field contamination. Hanscom AFB is also a potential contributor to the ground water contamination in this area.

Approximately 11,000 people rely on drinking water wells within 4 miles of NWIRP. In addition, approximately 12,800 people receive water from an intake on the Shawsheen River, 7 miles downstream of NWIRP. There are extensive wetlands and several species of rare plants and wildlife along Elm Brook and the Shawsheen River downstream of the NWIRP.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be

found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) (http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.