

NPL Site Narrative for Picatinny Arsenal (USARMY)

PICATINNY ARSENAL (USARMY) Rockaway Township, New Jersey

Conditions at proposal (July 14, 1989): Picatinny Arsenal covers 6,491 acres in Morris County, New Jersey. Most of the land is in Rockaway Township; small portions of the western side are in Jefferson Township. Interstate 80 is about 1 mile southeast of the main entrance. The surrounding areas are suburban as well as summer vacation areas.

In operation for over 100 years, the arsenal has been a major source of munitions in wartime throughout much of this century. Currently, its primary mission is research, development, and pilot plant production of explosives and propellants for the Army.

Picatinny Arsenal is participating in the Installation Restoration Program (IRP), established in 1978. Under this program, the Department of Defense seeks to identify, investigate, and clean up contamination from hazardous materials. IRP studies have established that many areas on the arsenal are contaminated by manufacturing waste and unexploded ordnance. At least 54 potential hazardous waste areas exist on the base, according to a 1987 report of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. They include areas for testing rocket fuels, munitions, and propellants; areas where chemicals and shells were buried; surface impoundments; landfills; drum storage areas; and a sludge bed.

Monitoring wells and soils adjacent to unlined lagoons, which, until 1981, held waste water from metal plating and etching facilities, are contaminated with trichloroethylene, trans-1,2-dichloroethylene, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, and tetrachloroethylene, according to tests reported to EPA in 1986. Some of these same wells have elevated concentrations of cadmium, lead, and copper. The arsenal's 5,500 employees obtain their drinking water from two wells upgradient from an area of confirmed ground water contamination.

Lake Denmark and Picatinny Lake, which are on the base, are used for recreational activities.

Status (February 21, 1990): In 1990, the Army is scheduled to begin cleaning up the contaminated ground water around the metal plating operations and submit to EPA a plan for cleanup of the entire arsenal. The plan will assign priorities for cleaning up the many contaminated areas.

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.