

# **Fact Sheet**

## **Fort Ord Environmental Cleanup**

### **Operable Unit 2 (OU2) Groundwater Treatment Plant**

The Army has been working on the environmental cleanup of the former Fort Ord since 1985. For sheer size, the cleanup of two groundwater aquifers under the base involving the closure of the landfill, treatment of billions of gallons of water, and as many as 30 years of work is by far the largest effort.

The affected groundwater areas or aquifers are between 100 and 300 feet below the ground surface and extend under the northern portion of the base. The groundwater has been contaminated by chemicals from automotive maintenance, industrial operations, and landfill activities on the former base. These and similar activities included the use and disposal of common solvents which along with other volatile organic compounds eventually entered the uppermost groundwater aquifers under the former Fort Ord.

#### **Local drinking water supplies remain unaffected**

The quality of local water supplies is checked quarterly by providers and the Monterey County Health Department has issued a moratorium on drilling new supply wells in the area surrounding the groundwater contamination. Quarterly monitoring conducted by the Army in conjunction with remediation and in compliance with state water supply regulations has not identified supplies that exceed of drinking water standards. The water remains safe to drink.

#### **Operable Unit 2 expanded**

The largest of three treatment plants currently operating to cleanup contaminated groundwater under the former Fort Ord has been expanded. The treatment plant, designated Operable Unit 2 (OU2), has been working since 1995 and has treated more than three billion gallons of groundwater at a rate of 400-450 gallons per minute. The expansion now enables the OU2 plant to treat contaminated groundwater at a higher rate and capture groundwater that may be outside the reach of the original system of extraction wells.

#### **A total groundwater cleanup is still 30 years or more away**

The Army expanded the OU2 plant to include seven new extraction wells in areas not previously tapped and two infiltration galleries for returning the water to the aquifer after treatment. The completed expansion is capable of treating contaminated groundwater at an average of 950 gallons per minute, nearly twice the previous rate.

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To learn more about Fort Ord groundwater contamination and cleanup, visit our web site at: [www.fortordcleanup.com](http://www.fortordcleanup.com) or contact Lyle Shurtleff at (831) 393-9691.