

FACT SHEET
Fort Ord Environmental Cleanup Fact Sheet
Operable Unit 1 - Fritzsche Army Airfield Fire Drill Area

Operable Unit 1 (OU1) is the Fritzsche Army Airfield Fire Drill Area (FDA), which was established in 1962 as a training area for the Fort Ord Fire Department. As part of training activities, fuel was discharged from an onsite storage tank into a pit, ignited, and then extinguished. Training activities at the FDA were discontinued in 1985 and the associated structures were removed.

Environmental investigations began at OU 1 in 1984 under Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Cleanup and/or Abatement Orders. The RWQCB also issued Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) for operation of the groundwater and soil treatment system and discharge of treated water. Remedial investigations were performed after closure of the FDA to document the nature and extent of contamination in soil and groundwater. Remedial Investigation (RI) activities began in November 1985 and were completed in 1987. The results of the RI indicated that petroleum hydrocarbons were present in the shallow surface soils and that benzene; TCE, trans-1, 2-dichloroethene, and methyl ethyl ketone were present in the groundwater.

To address the soil and groundwater contamination identified during the RI, the remedial alternative selected in the FDA Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) was constructed. The remedial alternative consisted of: (1) excavation and treatment of petroleum contaminated soils and (2) installation of a groundwater extraction and treatment system, which began operation in August 1988.

As part of soil treatment, approximately 4,000 cubic yards of petroleum-contaminated soil were removed and temporarily stockpiled, and the excavation was backfilled with clean soil. The excavated contaminated soil was then spread on the ground surface for biotreatment.

The groundwater treatment system consists of 2 extraction wells, 11 monitoring wells installed in the uppermost (A-) aquifer, 1 monitoring well installed in the first water-bearing zone beneath the A-aquifer, 4 piezometers screened in the A-aquifer, a granular activated carbon (GAC) treatment system, and an effluent spray system. Treated groundwater from the system was used as part of the soil bio-remediation system, and nutrients were added. The nutrient-enriched treated water was then sprayed onto the biotreatment areas where the petroleum-contaminated soil had been placed to promote microbial growth and facilitate biotreatment. The spraying was monitored and controlled to maintain adequate moisture content for microbial growth; excess spray was directed to a small area upgradient of the biotreatment area. Microbial growth was also facilitated by routine tilling of the soil. Biotreatment of the contaminated soil was completed by August 1991.

Treatment of groundwater will continue until reaching aquifer cleanup goals or levels that are protective of human health and the environment. Groundwater is monitored as part of a quarterly monitoring program. Quarterly groundwater monitoring reports are available in the information repositories located at the Seaside, California State University, Monterey Bay, and Chamberlin libraries.