



Strontium-90 Laboratory Procedures

Frequently Asked Questions

Hunters Point Naval Shipyard — October 2021



The Navy continues to be methodical while conducting radiological retesting at the former Hunters Point Naval Shipyard (HPNS) to ensure protection of public health.

Strontium-90 is a radionuclide the Navy is measuring as part of the Parcel G radiological rework. The Navy collaborated with chemists and regulatory agencies to refine the laboratory method for strontium-90 to provide more precise results. The questions and answers that follow address the updated lab analysis and next steps.

What happened?

Navy chemists determined that strontium-90 results need further evaluation. Approximately 10% of samples indicate strontium-90 levels slightly above the remediation goal. To date, two samples were re-analyzed to confirm results and strontium-90 was not detected. To remedy this, the Navy worked with regulatory agencies and chemists to refine the laboratory procedure to produce more precise analytical results.

What exactly is changing?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) method for identifying strontium (EPA Method 905.0 MOD) will continue to be used. The Navy has requested that the laboratory refine the method to achieve more precision in strontium-90 results and to detect even smaller amounts of strontium-90. The changes will include increasing the size of the soil sample being analyzed (2.5 grams compared to the previous 1 gram) and extending the laboratory procedure timeframe an additional seven (7) days. The Navy will reanalyze all Parcel G soil samples using the updated method.

Is there reason to be concerned about strontium-90 at HPNS?

No. Strontium-90 lab results to date have not indicated levels considered a risk to human health or the environment.

Is this change allowed?

Yes. Both the Navy work plan for the Parcel G retesting work and the EPA's laboratory method for strontium-90 allow for adjustments.

Do the regulatory agencies support changing the method for strontium?

Yes. The Navy worked with regulatory agencies and chemists to refine the laboratory method to provide greater certainty in the lab results. Regulatory agencies agree that the improved method will provide more precise data for comparison to our remedial goals.

What is next?

The Navy will reanalyze all of the Parcel G strontium-90 soil samples collected to date. The Navy will continue to provide the community updates on the Parcel G retesting work and results through our website, community meetings, and quarterly reports.