

Former Naval Station Treasure Island

Frequently Asked Questions | May 2021



What is the Navy's role at Treasure Island?

Since the closure of former Naval Station Treasure Island (NSTI) in 1997, the Navy's role has been to manage the environmental cleanup and transfer of property out of Navy custody and control. The Navy has made significant progress and will continue to work closely with regulatory partners, the Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA), other stakeholders, and the public to allow for safe use and successful transfer of the remaining property.

Which government agencies oversee the Navy's work at Treasure Island?

All work has been conducted with multiple layers of oversight by regulatory agencies; each have their own responsibilities for ensuring public safety. Agencies overseeing the Navy's work include the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), California Department of Public Health (CDPH), and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board.

How does the Navy keep residents up to date?

The Navy keeps residents informed through numerous outreach activities. These activities include presenting updates on the environmental program at quarterly Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meetings, sending fact sheets via email and postal mail, providing environmental cleanup work notices to residents in three languages, and maintaining an informational website where details about environmental cleanup work at the former NSTI are posted.

What is the process for cleaning up radiological contamination?

The Navy follows an established procedure for cleaning up radiological contamination required by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation & Liability Act

of 1980 (CERCLA) and the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 as implemented by regulations in the National Contingency Plan. The primary steps include reviewing records, determining the extent of the contamination by collecting environmental samples, conducting cleanup operations, and testing the areas to confirm cleanup is complete.

Is it safe to live on Treasure Island?

Yes, it is safe to live, work on and visit Treasure Island. Multiple agencies have concluded that even as cleanup requirements at former NSTI evolved, there was no unacceptable risk to human health and safety in residential areas from chemicals in the soil or subsurface radiological objects discovered through the environmental cleanup program. Independent radiological evaluations conducted by CDPH in accessible areas of Site 12 have found no unacceptable risk from subsurface radiological objects. Radiological findings by the Navy have also been confirmed with independent evaluations conducted by CDPH.

While there are certain areas of former NSTI that are still undergoing investigation and cleanup, those areas have physical barriers in place to prevent public access. If radiological objects are discovered, they are removed and properly disposed of. Work practices such as covering trucks carrying soil as well as air monitoring and dig restrictions safeguard the public. In addition, drinking water on former NSTI is not sourced on the island, but instead is supplied by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. More information on protectiveness of the site remedies and ongoing site investigations and cleanup efforts can be found in the NSTI Five Year Review conducted in 2020. The Five Year Review is available on the BRAC NSTI Website at: <https://www.bracpmo.navy.mil/nsti>.

How is the public protected from dust caused by earth moving operations?

Navy contractors use dust suppression measures when moving earth for a cleanup project. The stockpile and runoff control plans are specified in the work plans for each project and must be reviewed and approved by DTSC. These measures include regular watering of surface soil to reduce dust, tire washing as needed, covering trucks that transport soil to landfills, and regular monitoring of air quality and dust, both upwind and downwind from any earth moving operations.

What does the Navy do with soil and materials excavated during the cleanup process?

In accordance with cleanup standards and the CERCLA process, samples are collected from the excavated soil and materials and then analyzed for chemical or radiological contaminants. After testing, soil that meets health and safety standards may be re-used on Treasure Island. Any soil that is not re-used is disposed of in specially permitted landfills.

Have there been any studies related to cancer rates or health issues at Treasure Island?

The Cancer Prevention Institute of California investigated cancer rates on Treasure Island, published in a memorandum dated June 9, 2014, and concluded that there is no evidence of significantly elevated incidence rates of all cancers among the residents of Treasure Island.

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) is a federal public health agency under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In response to public request, ATSDR reviewed Navy and CDPH radiological investigations at former NSTI. In a letter dated October 26, 2016, the ATSDR concluded that the Navy and CDPH “have used and will continue to use best practices to evaluate health risks associated with any radiological objects found at the former Naval Station Treasure Island and take appropriate actions to protect public health.”

Who sets radiation protection standards?

Radiation protection standards are established by several federal and state agencies, including the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and CDPH. The Navy works with these agencies and others to ensure compliance with all radiation protection requirements.

Is Treasure Island a Superfund Site?

No. Treasure Island is not listed on the National Priorities List, which is a list of hazardous waste sites eligible for long-term remedial action financed under the federal Superfund program. The Navy follows the same investigation and cleanup process regardless of Superfund status. Treasure Island has a Superfund Site ID because it went through the Site Assessment process; however, National Priorities Listing was not pursued by the U.S. EPA because cleanup was already being conducted by the Navy, with the State of California providing regulatory oversight. The cleanup work at Treasure Island involves investigations and cleanup actions to address risks to human health and the environment associated with releases of hazardous substances. This work is conducted in accordance with the CERCLA process.

Who should the public contact to answer health related questions?

For health related questions, please contact your primary health care provider or physician.

- If you do not have a primary health care provider or physician, call the Healthy San Francisco Hotline at: (415) 615-4555 or visit the Healthy San Francisco website: <https://healthysanfrancisco.org/>.
- Residents of Treasure Island can visit the [Treasure Island Community Clinic](#) at 949 9th Street (entrance at Avenue M). Clinic re-opening is anticipated in June 2021.
- To register a concern about environmental health issues with SFDPH, call 311 (or if calling from a cell phone, use (415) 701-2311). Using the [311 website](#), choose “Public Health, Department of” under “New Request”. Your complaint will be recorded and routed to the Environmental Health Branch at San Francisco Department of Public Health.

For More Information

- Visit the Navy’s website at <https://www.bracpmo.navy.mil/NSTI>
- Send an email to tahirih.linz@navy.mil
- Contact Tahirih Linz, BRAC Environmental Coordinator, (619) 524-6073