

Military Munitions Response Program

Rock Island Arsenal achieves response complete at former test range

Todd Hornback, public affairs, and
Nora Hawk, environmental support

The Environmental Protection Agency and the Garrison Commander signed the Final Revised Action Memorandum Feb. 18, 2014, noting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Louisville District, completion of the response actions under the Military Munitions Response Program at the Rock Island Arsenal former test range in Illinois.

“This project substantially reversed 100 years of environmental impact associated with weapons testing on Rock Island Arsenal,” said Mark Jacobson, construction manager, USACE, Louisville District Arsenal Field Office.

The Former Test Range is a five-acre site used between 1904 and 1995 to test various weapons. The Army constructed two concrete and armor-plate bunkers in 1944 to capture projectiles fired from test tanks and artillery components. The bunkers were also reportedly used for explosive ordnance disposal when responding to unexploded ordnance incidents.

The Corps, in support of the Rock Island Arsenal Directorate of Public Works and Army Environmental Command, conducted the environmental restoration on the former test range—the arsenal’s only MMRP site.



Environmental Quality Management, Inc.

The Corps environmental restoration left this bunker building in place to preserve the integrity of the arsenal’s flood wall.

The multi-year action to remove munitions and explosives of concern was completed in 2012 and included:

- 1) Removal, demilitarization and recycling of 66,000 pounds of munitions debris
- 2) Removal and disposal of more than 2,000 tons of bunker sand and soil as a non-hazardous waste
- 3) Removal and disposal of more than 19 tons of construction debris and

organic material

- 4) Cleaning and sealing of the two former bunker buildings. The buildings were left in place rather than being demolished to maintain the integrity of the arsenal’s flood wall.

“The project delivery team persevered in achieving concurrence from all government agencies and proper regulatory closure to this project despite delays associated with federal funding during the budget crisis,” Jacobson said.

Overall, approximately \$1.1 million was spent on the investigation and response action at the site. Only long-term management activities are now needed at this site, which include an annual inspection of the former Test Range site by the Arsenal’s Directorate of Public Works and to ensure that established land-use control requirements are maintained at the site.

The Louisville District will also support Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) Five-Year Reviews at the installation.



Environmental Quality Management, Inc.

The environmental restoration work in 2011 shows munitions debris to be recycled or removed and the clearing of a bunker building.