FACT SHEET
Hunters Point Naval Shipyard
Parcel C Air Monitoring: Questions Answered
November 2025

Background

Public health and safety are the Navy's highest priority while performing cleanup at Hunters Point, and there is currently no health risk to site workers or the local community.

This Fact Sheet is provided to clarify the information regarding Plutonium-239 (Pu-239) that was detected in an air sample at the former Hunters Point Naval Shipyard (HPNS).

In March 2025, it was reported to the Navy that one ambient air sample collected in November 2024, at a downwind air monitoring location in Parcel C measured Plutonium-239 (Pu-239) at 8.16×10^{-15} microcuries per milliliter (µCi/mL), above the project action level of 4×10^{-15} µCi/mL. The standard turn-around for this type of testing is about four months. From a public dose perspective, a person continuously exposed to this level of Pu-239 for the week that was collected, would have received a dose of less than 0.5 mrem. For perspective, a round-trip flight from San Francisco to New York results in an exposure of 4 mrem.

Exceeding the project's regulatory action level does not represent a risk to workers or the public. Regulatory action levels are deliberately and conservatively established below levels of health concern to ensure action is taken onsite by the contractor before any impact to human health can occur.

The Pu-239 result was a single outlier that could not be reproduced. The Navy has taken more than 200 air samples since July 2023, and this outlier result is the only detection of Pu-239 to date. The laboratory completed a reanalysis of the sample in April 2025 to confirm the result. This second analysis did not detect Pu-239. Because the result was not a health concern, was not reproduced after being retested, there were no field activities occurring onsite that could have caused the Pu-239 detection, and all other air monitoring data has been non-detect since 2023, this single result was flagged as an outlier for further evaluation to validate its accuracy before notifying regulators of the outlier result.

Between May and September, the Navy and the laboratory further investigated the test results and conducted a methodical review of the laboratory's procedures and practices to ensure they complied with standards. A third party also conducted an analysis of the laboratory's performance. After the single outlier result was confirmed, the Navy verbally notified the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and its state regulatory agency partners in October 2025 in preparation for the November 2025 community meeting.

The Navy is committed to transparent communication of our cleanup efforts, and we routinely provide updates with the public, City of San Francisco, and regulatory agencies as information is available. The Navy will work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control, and the California Department of Public Health to improve the timeliness of our notifications.

The Navy provides the community with regular updates on our clean up progress and the results of sampling. All community members are invited to join us at the next bi-monthly Hunters Point Shipyard Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting on **November 17 at 6:00 pm, located at 451 Galvez Ave, San Francisco 94124**

Questions and Answers

Question: How much Pu-239 was detected in the sample?

Answer: Pu-239 was reported in one ambient air sample at 8.16 x 10^{-15} microcuries per milliliter (µCi/mL), which is above the regulatory action level of 4.00 x 10^{-15} µCi/mL. The sample was reanalyzed and did not detect Pu-239. Ambient air samples collected from the other perimeter air monitor, closer to residents, did not detect Pu-239.

Question: If the outlier was determined to be valid and accurate, what is the health impact of this exposure to this level of Pu-239?

Answer: A single detection of Pu-239 at this level does not pose a risk to human health or public safety. From a public dose perspective, a person continuously exposed to this level of Pu-239 for the week that was collected, would have received a dose of less than 0.5 mrem. For perspective, a round-trip flight from San Francisco to New York results in an exposure of 4 mrem.

Question: What about the "11-month delay" cited by the San Francisco Department of Health?

Answer: The sample was collected in November 2024 and was sent to an accredited laboratory to analyze. The standard turn-around for this type of testing is about four months. After receiving the result in March 2025, the laboratory completed a reanalysis of the sample in April 2025 to validate it. This second analysis did not detect Pu-239. Because the result could not reproduced, and there were no field activities occurring onsite that could have caused the Pu-239 detection, and all other air monitoring data has been non-detect since 2023, this single result was flagged as an outlier for further evaluation to validate its accuracy. If the result was accurate, it did not pose a health risk to the public or site workers. Between May and September, the Navy and the laboratory further investigated the test results and conducted a methodical review of the laboratory's procedures and practices to ensure they complied with standards. A third party also conducted an analysis of the laboratory's performance. In October 2025, the Navy verbally notified the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and its state regulatory agency partners of the outlier result in preparation for the November 2025 community meeting. A comprehensive analysis of all sample results will be briefed at the next Hunters Point Shipyard Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting on Nov. 17, 2025.

Question: What type of safety measures are taken during radiological cleanup to ensure public safety?

Answer: The Navy implements several on-site controls and procedures at HPNS to ensure public safety. Examples include: (a) the establishment of radiologically controlled areas; (b) daily monitoring of air quality; and (c) implementation of the Base-wide Dust Control Plan to contain contamination within radiologically controlled areas. Implementation of dust mitigation plans to prevent the spread of materials from controlled areas are utilized to protect site workers, the environment, and the public. In addition, regulatory agencies and the California Department of Public Health collect their own confirmation samples from radiological cleanup sites for independent verification and site workers follow health and safety plans specific to their tasks.

Question: How does the Navy ensure the safety of public health during clean up at Hunters Point?

Answer: The Navy implements several on-site controls and procedures at HPNS to ensure public safety including measures to control dust to keep material from spreading outside of controlled areas. The Navy implements a robust air monitoring program at HPNS to ensure the health and safety of workers and the public during field work operations. The HPNS air monitoring program includes real-time dust monitoring and long-term ambient air sampling in accordance with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Particulate Matter and Visible Emissions standards and to meet the California State Ambient Air Quality Standard (CSAAQS).

During dust monitoring, the air is continuously measured using field equipment to determine the amount of dust in the air at upwind and downwind locations to ensure it is not leaving the work area. This real-time particulate dust monitoring enables field crews to promptly address any dust generation concerns. Real-time dust particulate monitoring shows zero elevated levels at Parcel C.

Longer-term ambient monitoring is conducted to inform workers if adjustments to dust control procedures are required. Action levels are intentionally set at sufficiently low levels to allow for workers to cease operations before any member of the public or workers could be exposed to unhealthy levels of contamination. The ambient air sampling process includes the collection of air samples during field work that are sent to a laboratory and analyzed for radioisotopes (radium-226, cesium-137, plutonium-239, strontium-90, cobalt-60, and thorium-226), metals, and asbestos.

Questions and Answers (continued)

Question: How is the public protected from dust caused by earth moving operations at the HPNS?

Answer: The Navy is implementing several measures to control dust on HPNS during construction activities. Contractors prepare their own dust control plans specific to proposed fieldwork. Examples of dust management in fieldwork plans include soil maintenance, air monitoring, durable covers, and truck management. Dust suppression measures are defined in the Navy's work plans, which are reviewed and approved by regulatory agencies. These measures include regular watering of surface soil to reduce dust, tire washing, covering of trucks transporting soil to landfills, and regular air quality monitoring both upwind and downwind from the location of earth moving operations.

Question: How does the Navy manage soil during construction at HPNS?

Answer: Water is used to wet the soil during soil movement activities, such as excavation or grading, to minimize release of dust into the atmosphere. Soil stockpiled on HPNS is stored on top of plastic and then covered with a soil cementing compound or by a plastic sheet to prevent dust. Straw waddles are placed around soil stockpiles to prevent soil runoff during heavy rains. Soil stockpiles are inspected on a regular basis to ensure covers (soil cementing compound or plastic sheet) remain in good condition with no visible signs of erosion that might cause additional onsite dust.

Question: Are Hunters Point site workers or members of the community at risk of radiation exposure?

Answer: Radiation is present naturally in the Earth's environment and we all experience some exposure on a daily basis regardless of location or lifestyle. The single outlier reading of Pu-239 is significantly less than the amount of background radiation received by an average person on an average day. Action levels at HPNS are conservatively set well below levels that would impact site workers or the public if continuously exposed to air with isotopes at that concentration.

Question: What is the process for cleaning up radiological contamination?

Answer: The Navy follows an established procedure for cleaning up radiological contamination under federal law. The primary steps include designating a Radiological Controlled Area, investigation, remediation, and confirmation sampling by regulatory agencies.

Question: How is the cleanup being overseen, by whom, and what are the safeguards in place?

Answer: The Navy is the lead agency responsible for the investigation and cleanup of the shipyard. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and its state regulatory agency partners (including the California Department of Toxic Substances Control [DTSC] and the California Department of Public Health [CDPH]) validate Navy compliance with Federal law and Superfund requirements to ensure cleanup at the former Shipyard protects human health and the environment.

Question: How often is the air monitored and where can I see results from air monitoring stations?

Answer: For all active construction projects, air monitoring stations are placed both downwind and upwind of cleanup activities. Air monitoring stations collect data on dust and chemicals in the air. Soils are screened in the field for airborne contaminants. Results from air monitoring stations may be found on the Navy's website (www.bracpmo.navy.mil/hpns) and on California Department of Toxic Substances Control website (www.dtsc.ca.gov).

Question: How is the Navy involving community members who live near the Shipyard in the cleanup?

Answer: The Navy leads the community involvement process at HPNS that includes a robust outreach program, including electronic communications, postings in local news media and blogs, and outreach to community leaders and community-based organizations. Navy community meetings offer information on cleanup progress and specific cleanup technologies, providing an opportunity for community members to learn about the cleanup and ask questions. Technical documents are available for review by members of the public at the online Administrative Record on the Navy's website. The Navy hosts several guided bus tours of the cleanup sites at HPNS each year, gives presentations to community groups, and hosts informational tables at local community events. The Navy has hired a community technical advisor to provide additional resources for community members during the radiological data evaluation. Regulatory Agencies participate in Navy community engagement events, take part in meetings hosted by local organizations, and refer inquiries from the public to the Navy for response.

If you would like regular updates about HPNS and information about upcoming events, please join the mailing list by emailing info@sfhpns.com.