



# DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PROGRAM Outreach and Community Engagement

The War Department (DoW) conducts cleanup through the Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP). Effective outreach and community engagement help DoW make smart cleanup decisions. These efforts prioritize the health and safety of military communities, ensuring that Service members can focus on the mission.

## DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PROGRAM



Investigate DoW releases of contaminants to the environment and determine appropriate cleanup actions



Optimize effective science-based approaches while executing cleanup activities



Maximize communication, collaboration, and public participation during the cleanup process

## IMPORTANCE OF OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

DoW supports regular and open engagement with communities during cleanup. Communicating early and often with communities helps the Department:

- Understand and respond to community concerns;
- Build trust and strong relationships; and
- Develop effective, lasting cleanup solutions.

DoW strives to improve how it shares information on cleanup progress with the public.



## ECCO INITIATIVE

In 2022, DoW launched the Environmental Cleanup Communication and Outreach (ECCO) Initiative to help the Department improve how it shares information with communities, regulators, and other stakeholders (<https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/eer/ecc/pfas/po/index.html>). DoW kicked off the initiative by observing community engagement activities at several cleanup locations indicated by the map on the left.

DoW uses feedback from ECCO to strengthen outreach efforts and identify best practices.



U.S. Department of War

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**Protecting Human Health and the Environment**

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## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Effective community engagement is frequent and consistent, supports two-way dialogue, and helps make complex cleanup work easier to understand. In addition to outreach events such as open houses and town halls, DoW's community involvement resources include:

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLANS (CIPs)

Installations work collaboratively with surrounding communities, regulators, and other stakeholders to develop CIPs. CIPs serve as roadmaps for meaningful public involvement and communication throughout the cleanup process. They are tailored to address community needs, concerns, and expectations.

### RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARDS (RABs)

RABs are groups of Department personnel, community members, regulators, and other stakeholders that meet regularly to discuss an installation's cleanup activities. Since 1994, RABs have served as valuable forums for sharing information and providing community members the chance to share questions, concerns, ideas, and other comments with installation decision-makers.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (TAPP)

TAPP provides technical assistance to RAB community members to help them understand scientific and engineering issues related to cleanup activities. This assistance helps them provide informed input into the cleanup process. TAPP projects typically provide assistance with technical documents, technologies, and risk assessments.

Through DERP, DoW will continue to provide opportunities for the public to get involved in cleanup efforts. These efforts protect people's health and the environment, as well as support mission readiness.



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