

Millions will be spent to clean soil

By Eric Pfanner
Senior Editor

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will spend more than \$2.5 million over the next two years as part of a program to clean up contaminants that have leaked into soil and water southeast of the NU Agricultural Research and Development Station, corps officials said Thursday.

The NU facility is located near Mead on land formerly used for the Nebraska Ordnance Plant, a World War II munitions factory operated by the U.S. Department of Defense.

John Moyian, the corps' chief of the foundation and materials branch for the Kansas City District Office, said partial cleanup of the contaminants will begin this fall. At the same time, the corps will do a comprehensive remedial investigation of the site and the contaminants, he said.

The corps presented a confirmation study last week to members of the UNL administration as well as federal, state and local government officials stating that further investigation and cleanup efforts are necessary.

George Hanley, chief of public affairs for the corps in Kansas City, said three contaminants have leaked into the water supply southeast of the facility.

Royal Demolition Explosive, or RDX, Trichloroethylene, or TCE, and Polychlorinated Biphenyls, or PCBs, have been found in 10 wells located on and near the university's site, Hanley said.

The owners of three of the wells are using bottled water, he said, be-

cause the contamination levels are considered dangerous by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Tom Krepel, assistant to the chancellor and director of university relations, said the university purchased 9,000 acres of the 17,000-acre World War II ordnance plant in the early 1960s for its agricultural station.

The site has several uses, he said, including animal science and forestry research.

But "contamination tends to limit what you can do with the site," Krepel said.

In the early 1980s, the university discovered the leakage of contamination and publicized it, he said.

Testing done in December 1988 indicated that the contaminants had entered a well on the agricultural

station Krepel said. In March, contaminants were found in the other wells, he said.

After contaminants were identified, Krepel said, the corps began its investigation.

"The corps has a well-defined process" for dealing with contamination, he said.

First, he said, came an inventory report, which confirmed that the site used to be a Department of Defense facility.

Next came the confirmation study, completed last week. This study indicated that the third step, the remedial investigation, is necessary.

The corps will then do a feasibility study, in which corrective measures

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