



Removing Munitions and Explosives of Concern: Emergency Permit

Atlantic Fleet Weapons Training Area – Vieques
Vieques Island, Puerto Rico March - April 2005

For more information, visit our Web site at

www.epa.gov/region2/vieques

or one of our offices at

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Caribbean Environmental Protection
Division

Vieques Field Office
Attn: Daniel Rodríguez
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Carretera #200, km 0.4
Vieques, Puerto Rico
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Caribbean Environmental Protection
Division

Attn: Brenda Reyes
Centro Europa Building, Suite 417
Ave. Ponce de León 1492, Parada 22
San Juan, Puerto Rico
Telephone: (787) 977-5869

Residents of Puerto Rico can also obtain information from the Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board at

National Plaza Building, Office 225
Attn: Yarissa Martinez
Ponce de León #431
Hato Rey, Puerto Rico 00917
Telephone: (787) 767-8181, ext. 2954

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has granted a 90-day emergency permit to the Navy to detonate recovered munitions and explosives on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico. These munitions consist of explosives used for training activities during the 60 years Vieques served as an active Navy facility.

The Navy was required to obtain this permit to recover, relocate, and detonate munitions and explosives. They plan to recover these items and destroy them in consolidated detonations, rather than have numerous individual detonations at scattered sites. Under this permit, EPA requires:

- the recovered explosives be managed within the area of the former Live Impact Area located on the Eastern end of Vieques Island;
- the Navy publish a notice of the 90 day emergency permit;
- the Navy issue a report to EPA on activities implemented under the emergency permit within 30 days of the permit end date. This report will be available to the public.

The Navy has determined that the explosives would be too dangerous to be transported long distances. For this reason, the permit allows the Navy to temporarily relocate and explode the munitions in the former open detonation pits on Eastern Vieques.

It is important to note that this permit allows EPA monitor Navy's activities as the explosives are cleared. If EPA observes or receives reports of activities that could endanger human health or the environment on Vieques, work will not be permitted until the situation has been remedied. If the explosives are an immediate threat to public safety, the Navy may detonate it without moving it, however, they are required to comply with certain contingency and emergency requirements and report the action to EPA.

EPA will make every effort to keep residents of Vieques and other concerned individuals informed of the progress of the work associated with this permit. Interested individuals can find out more information on our Web site or at our offices listed on the left side of this fact sheet.