



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
Honolulu District



# MAKALAPA CRATER NAVY SALVAGE YARD

FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITE

JUNE 2025

## SUBSURFACE SOIL SAMPLING—FACT SHEET

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the Hawaii Department of Health and the Hawaii Department of Education, is conducting a planned subsurface soil sampling to confirm the absence of explosives of concern at the Makalapa Crater Navy Salvage Yard Formerly Used Defense Site. The site includes parts of the Radford High School (RHS) athletic complex and Makalapa Elementary School (MES).

This effort is part of the Remedial Investigation phase of the project under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA).

The goal is to confirm the absence of explosives of concern and ensure the site is safe for future ground-disturbing activities at the schools, such as construction or maintenance.

### HISTORY

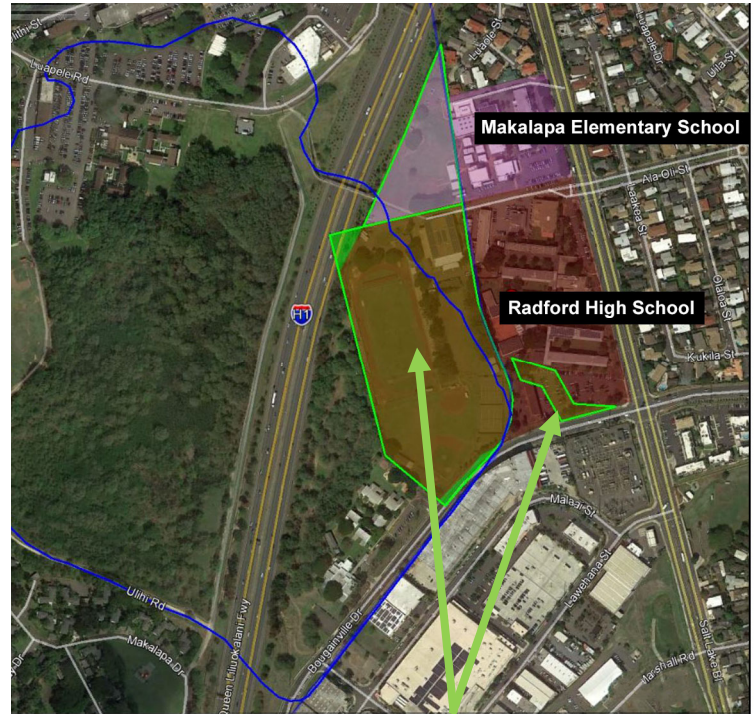
Makalapa Crater Navy Salvage Yard was used by the U.S. Navy during World War II as a salvage yard, burning dump and solid waste landfill for disposal of materials such as metal scrap, engine parts, empty ammunition casings, airplane parts and ship parts.

In the 1950s, the property was conveyed to the City and County of Honolulu and the State of Hawaii for public use. Today, parts of the site are home to RHS and MES.

In 2013, buried debris was discovered during renovations at the RHS track. This led to further investigation. In 2015, the site became eligible under the FUDS program, and USACE inherited the responsibility to investigate and, if required, clean up any potential contamination remaining on the site.

A remedial investigation (RI) was conducted from 2017 to 2021 to characterize soil up to 2 feet (ft) below ground surface within the remainder of the NSY Site. After identifying more information was needed, supplemental soil and vapor sampling was completed across the site in March 2024.

***Administrative facilities and classrooms on both campuses are not within the FUDS project boundary nor do they fall within USACE's area of responsibility. State Health Officials continue to deem both campuses safe for school operations.***



Former Makalapa Crater  
Boundary

Makalapa Crater Navy Salvage Yard USACE  
FUDS Project Boundary (19.3 acres)

### QUICK FACTS

<b>Who</b>	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
<b>What</b>	Subsurface Soil sampling
<b>Where</b>	Radford High athletic complex and Makalapa Elementary fields
<b>When</b>	June 23 – July 23, 2025
<b>Why</b>	To confirm the absence of explosives of concern from past military use and ensure the site is safe for future ground-disturbing activities at the schools, such as construction or maintenance.

### SAFETY

- State health officials continue to deem both campuses safe for school operations.
- The work is not expected to impact summer activities and will be complete before school resumes.
- Sampling will not affect buildings, classrooms, or areas outside the FUDS boundary.
- Based on past investigations and historical records, we anticipate uncovering normal waste such as rebar, scrap metal as well as material documented as safe, or MDAS, that pose no explosive threat.

# MAKALAPA CRATER NAVY SALVAGE YARD

## FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITE

### FAQs:

#### 1) What is a Formerly Used Defense Site, or FUDS?

FUDS are properties that were formerly owned by, leased to or possessed by the military services (Army, Navy, Air Force, or other Defense agencies) and transferred outside DOD control prior to October 17, 1986.

The Makalapa Crater Naval Salvage Yard became eligible under the FUDS program in 2015. For more information about FUDS go to: [www.fuds.mil](http://www.fuds.mil).

#### 2) Why is the Army leading this effort and not the Navy?

The U.S. Army is the DOD's lead agent for the FUDS Program. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers executes the FUDS Program on behalf of the U.S. Army and DOD.

#### 3) What fieldwork is being conducted at Radford High School athletic complex and Makalapa Elementary School playground?

USACE is completing subsurface soil sampling to confirm the absence of any explosives of concern at the Former Navy Salvage Yard as part of the Remedial Investigation under CERCLA.

#### 4) What is subsurface soil sampling?

The sampling consists of using handheld geophysical instruments, similar to a metal detector, to help identify areas that will require further investigation through excavation and removal of any anomalies.

#### 5) When and where will the sampling take place?

Field work activities will take place Monday through Sunday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., from June 23 to July 23, 2025. Sampling will not take place in buildings or classrooms, or outside the FUDS project boundary. Work areas will be clearly marked with safety cones.

#### 6) Is there a current health concern?

The main takeaway from the draft Remedial Investigation Report is that the two campuses remain safe for school operations. This is in line with recommendations from the Hawaii Department of Health. Testing and sampling is an important part of the process and is not being initiated due to the detection of an acute risk from any source.

The 2017 sampling determined that there was no risk to students or school operations; however, given the historical waste disposal activities at the site, soil vapor and soil gas samples were also collected in Spring 2024.



Photo 1: Handling scrap steel at Berth 23 headed for Makalapa Salvage — Jan. 18, 1943.



Photo 2: A view of unprepared scrap at Makalapa Salvage Yard—Oct. 29, 1944.



Photo 3: The 15-acre Radford High School property June 22, 1961, looking at the south-central portion of the site.

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## **FAQs:**

### **7) What is a Remedial Investigation?**

A RI is an in-depth study to gather data from the site to determine the nature and extent of contamination. Information from the RI is used to establish site cleanup criteria, alternatives for remedial action, and costs for remediation, if necessary.

### **8) How is this soil sampling different than what was completed in March 2024 and in 2017?**

Previous sampling consisted of collecting data to investigate any contaminants of potential concern in soil vapor/gas, given the historic waste disposal activities at the site. This current subsurface soil sampling is to confirm the absence of any explosives of concern at the Former Navy Salvage Yard.

### **9) What are explosives of concern?**

Explosives of concern are ammunition products and components that may pose an explosive hazard and/or risk to human health and safety. These items are broadly called Munitions and Explosives of Concern, or MEC. Examples include Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) such as grenades other explosives, that were deployed but failed to detonate; discarded military munitions (DMM) that were unfired or munitions constituents which refers to materials originating from unexploded ordnance.

### **10) Has anyone previously encountered MEC at this site?**

No. To date, USACE's field work and historical research has determined that the likelihood of encountering MEC at this site is low. USACE is completing sampling to confirm this assessment. If something of concern is found, then the probability rating may be increased.

### **11) Do you anticipate finding MEC during this subsurface soil sampling?**

No. Based on previous investigations and historical information, we anticipate uncovering normal waste such metal scrap, construction material, rebars, etc. and Material Documented as Safe, or MDAS, such as shell casings or other munitions debris, but no live munitions.

### **12) What is Material Documented as Safe, or MDAS?**

MDAS refers to material assessed as not presenting any explosive hazard such as shell casings, fragments or remnants of munitions that remain after use and disposal and are determined to be either empty, expended, or inert and contained no explosive hazard.

### **13) What happens if you find MEC?**

The Honolulu Police Department will be notified, and a local

Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Team will respond and safely remove the item.

### **14) Why is this taking so long? What is the project timeline?**

Please visit the project website for the latest timeline. This project adheres to the CERCLA process which can take several years to complete and is unique to each project. The next project milestone is the completion of the Remedial Investigation report.

### **15) Will this field work address the impacts from landfill settling?**

Sinkholes are a result of sediment settling (which is common when building on a landfill) and are unrelated to the contaminant concerns within the scope of our project. USACE does not have any legal authority to address them. The project's purpose is to assess any remaining contaminant levels to determine if future remedial actions are required.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

USACE is committed to ensuring key stakeholders, community leaders, government officials, stay informed about the Makalapa Navy Salvage Yard FUDS project and the activities that have and continue to be conducted there.

The FUDS team will continue to actively meet and engage with Hawaii's Congressional Delegation, State Legislators, DOH and DOE officials, as well as members of the public to provide project status updates and coordinate efforts while moving the project forward.



Updates are available on the project webpage at [www.poh.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/FUDS/Makalapa](http://www.poh.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/FUDS/Makalapa) or at the QR code.

## **RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD**

A solicitation for community interest in establishing a Restoration Advisory Board, or RAB, for this FUDS site will be made available through stakeholder organizations, local media and the project webpage.

RABs, are established in communities located near FUDS projects with an ongoing environmental response. RABs provide a forum for two-way communication between the community and the DoD about work and plans at nearby sites.

If you have questions regarding the Makalapa Crater Navy Salvage Yard FUDS project, contact USACE at [MakalapaCraterFUDS@usace.army.mil](mailto:MakalapaCraterFUDS@usace.army.mil).