



# News Release

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## **Temporary Halt to Treatment of Tanapag PCB-Contaminated Soil**

(Honolulu, August 16, 2002) -- Due to a temporary shortage of funds, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Honolulu District has delayed the treatment of PCB-contaminated soil at the Tanapag Village, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, PCB remediation project.

The halt was caused by a shortage of federal fiscal year 2002 (FY02) funds budgeted for treatment and disposal of the soil. FY02 ends on September 30.

More funds will become available when the new federal fiscal year 2003 (FY03) begins on October 1 and treatment will resume as soon as possible thereafter. Until FY03 money becomes available, the Corps contractor ECC will continue to work on site grading cleaned areas, excavating, screening, crushing, and stockpiling contaminated soil until treatment starts again.

The Corps informed CNMI Governor Juan Babauta of the decision today. Officials of Region 9, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the CNMI Division of Environmental Quality were also informed.

The Corps contracted with ECC to complete treatment of 20,750 tons of PCB-contaminated soil at the project site. That total was reached on August 11. However, while the treatment was underway, ECC and the Corps determined that the total quantity of soil stockpiled for treatment was underestimated. Moreover, additional soil sampling uncovered more contaminated soil along Kim's Road and beneath the soil stockpiles. The total amount of additional soil to be treated is estimated between 5,000 and 10,000 tons. A final estimate will be calculated before treatment resumes and that will determine how much longer the cleanup will take.

The Corps is committed to working with EPA, the CNMI government and the people of Tanapag to complete the project in a timely manner that will eliminate the risk of human exposure to PCB contamination. Prior to the final shutdown the Corps will resample the entire treatment area to ensure the site is clear of PCB.