

Steam Sterilization Plant Decommissioning and Demolition Information Paper

The U.S. Army Garrison Fort Detrick is set to undertake a multi-year, phased approach to the decommissioning and demolition of the Steam Sterilization Plant (SSP) and its exterior storage tanks on Fort Detrick in Frederick, MD. The Army built the SSP in 1953 as a secondary treatment system for previously treated laboratory effluent; it was closed permanently in 2018. The project will include the demolition of the building and restoration of the project site, with an estimated completion date of 2031. The first phase of the project began in April 2025 with the removal of exterior above ground utility pipes connected to the primary structure that ran parallel to Rosemont Avenue.

This project is being coordinated with appropriate federal, state and local agencies, ensuring safety, security, and environmental responsibility. Combat Capabilities Development Command Chemical Biological Center (DEVCOM CBC) Chemical Biological Applications and Risk Reduction (CBARR) Business Unit renowned for its expertise in global chemical and biological operations, will oversee this endeavor with the utmost professionalism.

The Army's leading expert in specialized industrial site demolition, CBARR is uniquely equipped to successfully complete this project, with a highly specialized and certified workforce that possesses a level of expertise unmatched in the Chemical/Biological recovery and remediation space. They consist of field-deployable scientists, engineers, technicians and operators, as well as CPRP/BPRP-certified individuals, and in-house Safety, Surety and Environmental compliance officials.

CBARR conducted a detailed historical document review of the facility and is in the process of developing detailed plans for the decommissioning and demolition of the facility, including the removal of 15 storage tanks, large industrial equipment, and extensive steel and concrete portions of the structure.

The Army, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), prepared an Environmental Assessment and coordinated with local and state agencies, determining a "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI) with long-term beneficial impacts of the project to the environment. The FONSI was signed in 2024.

CBARR will be taking appropriate safety precautions including wearing approved Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for handling waste generated from the decommissioning and demolition of the building. This will also include setting up a large tent, which may be visible from Rosemount Avenue, to facilitate the decommissioning of the outside tanks.

Fort Detrick's senior officials have met with Frederick City and County officials to brief the project plans, ensuring an open line of communication between military and local leaders.

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The greater Frederick community and its safety – including Fort Detrick personnel and residents – are the top priority for all agencies on the installation.