



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 5  
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## EPA CONCLUSIONS REGARDING CITIZEN CONCERNS ON THE DMDF

Over the past months, members of the Great Lakes Bay community have approached EPA with a number of concerns about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Saginaw River dredging project and its dredged materials disposal facility (DMDF). Many of the issues are outside EPA's jurisdiction, but the agency worked with the Corps of Engineers to respond to community concerns.

### Impact of dredging on drinking water supplies

Some area residents feared that contaminants suspended during dredging would move into Saginaw Bay and affect the municipal drinking water intakes there. EPA and the Corps have concluded that this would not occur. To help allay concerns, EPA sampled drinking water being drawn from Saginaw Bay when there was no dredging activity to establish background conditions. Samples were collected of both the water entering the municipal water treatment systems and of the treated water sent to the local communities. EPA analyzed the samples for a wide range of chemicals including dioxins, furans, volatile organics, semi-volatile organics, PCBs, pesticides and metals and found no contamination. The results from this background testing are available on EPA's Web site. EPA is planning another round of sampling in spring 2010 when the Corps is expected to resume dredging.

### Impact of the DMDF

Public concerns about the DMDF focused on several potential problems: odors, effects on wildlife, standing water allowing mosquitoes to breed; and residential well contamination. EPA asked the Corps of Engineers to address these issues. After a series of meetings, the Corps developed a fact sheet that EPA believes is responsive to the concerns that were raised. Below are summaries of Corps answers to some of the questions addressed. The entire fact sheet is attached and is online at [http://bit.ly/usace\\_dmdf](http://bit.ly/usace_dmdf).

- **Will the DMDF affect nearby residential wells?** No. The DMDF is constructed over natural clay soils and is surrounded by clay dikes that prevent contaminants from leaving the site. The Corps has installed a network of monitoring wells around the DMDF and will take immediate action if ground water is affected. EPA has also reviewed available information from wells in the general area of the residential wells and consulted with the Saginaw County Public Health Department. Based on this, EPA has determined that nearby residential wells are not used for drinking because the water quality in the area is brackish, of poor quality.

- **What will be the effect of the DMDF on wildlife?** The Corps is taking a number of steps to minimize the exposure of wildlife to dredged materials. For example, the Corps plans to dredge the most contaminated material first and dispose of it in the bottom of the DMDF. Then, it will be buried under less contaminated material.
- **Why is the area surrounding the DMDF sometimes flooded?** The area surrounding the DMDF is intentionally flooded periodically to provide a place for wildlife to live and reproduce. It is owned by Saginaw County and is being managed as a wetland mitigation project in cooperation with the State of Michigan.
- **Will there be odor problems related to the DMDF?** Odor is not generally an issue at DMDFs. However, the Corps will be monitoring for this and will take steps to correct any problems.

The Corps of Engineers fact sheet provides contact information for additional information regarding the DMDF. For questions about EPA's Superfund cleanup of the Tittabawassee River, Saginaw River & Bay, please contact EPA community involvement coordinator Don de Blasio (312-886-4360 or [deblasio.don@epa.gov](mailto:deblasio.don@epa.gov)). There is also extensive information on EPA's Web site at [epa.gov/region5/sites/dowchemical](http://epa.gov/region5/sites/dowchemical).