



Maryland Department of the
Environment

FACTS ABOUT: TRIUMPH EXPLOSIVES BURN PIT SITE

Site Location

The Triumph Explosives Burn Pit site is allegedly located in the vicinity of the ATK Propulsion property at 55 Thiokol Road, off Nottingham Road, Elkton, Cecil County, Maryland. The Plant itself consists of approximately 620 acres and is situated in a rural industrial setting adjacent to Triumph Industrial Park. The site is currently owned by ATK. The property has historically been a munitions and fireworks manufacturing plant and recently a plant manufacturing rocket motors and propulsion systems. In the period between 1938 and 1946 the property was impacted by military operations. Access to the property by land is fenced, guarded, and well controlled; however, access from Little Elk Creek is, for the most part, totally uncontrolled.

Site History

Historical documents make reference to the Triumph Explosives Burn Pit being located two miles northwest of Elkton, Maryland near the intersection of Routes 40 and 279. The property which may contain the Burn Pit occupies approximately 19 acres of the Triumph Industrial Park and is located north of Route 40, west of Blue Ball Road and East of Little Elk Creek along the banks of Little Elk Creek. The actual size and location of the Burn Pit could not be verified during an MDE investigation. The most recent use of the site has been as a working manufacturing plant. During the decade before and during World War II, the parcel had been the site of activity related to the manufacture of fireworks and munitions.

The Triumph Explosives Industries Burn Pit was documented as an area for the disposal of waste explosives and ordnance related material. This waste explosive was reportedly collected in drums and kept wetted with alcohol or ether. This waste was then carried to a shallow pit on the edge of the property, spread thinly and allowed to burn. Plant personnel monitored the burn until the waste explosive was ostensibly consumed. Photographs in the TEI newsletter from the period of concern show the operation of a burn pit. This Burn Pit was abandoned in favor of the Zeitler Road Firehole when new construction placed the 40-mm anti-aircraft munitions manufacturing plant in close proximity to the area of the Burn Pit.



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Environmental Investigation and Action

A geophysical survey conducted for MDE by NAEVA Geophysics, Inc. (NAEVA) did not confirm a location of the pit on the portion of the property east of Little Elk Creek.

There are no permits on file with MDE for the disposal of waste material at the Triumph Explosives Burn Pit site. However, it should be noted that the site operated prior to the requirement for solid waste disposal permits.

Current Status

The ATK Elkton Plant is the subject of an ongoing RCRA corrective action and has an EPA accepted plan for natural attenuation of two contaminant plumes (perchlorate and TCE).



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