

# DID YOU KNOW HUNTERS POINT NAVAL SHIPYARD STILL HAS RADIOACTIVE "HOT SPOTS" SINCE WWII?

## WOULD YOU BUY A NEW HOME FOR YOUR FAMILY BUILT ATOP A RADIOACTIVE TOXIC WASTE DUMP?

In 2004 Breast Cancer Action and the Breast Cancer Fund in San Francisco found that the 'best-established environmental cause of breast cancer' is ionizing radiation. The San Francisco Bay Area has the highest incidence of breast cancer among measured metropolitan areas on Earth.

## HISTORY

**1939** – The seventy-sixth congress purchases 47 acres for 3.9 million dollars, it was acquired by the Navy 11 days before Pearl Harbor. They eventually seized 500 more acres to build ships, to modify, maintain and repair all types of water craft (600 fighting and support ships) and held ordinance training exercises. At its peak over 17,000 were employed at the Hunters Point shipyard. Many of the workers were newly transplanted African-Americans from the Southern states of Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and Texas...Ironically, African Americans were not even allowed to serve on U.S. Navy ships in any capacity other than as mess workers.

**1940's** – From 1940 to 1950 the black population in the Bay Area increased from 16,500 to 147,000, mostly the result of labor demand in the shipyards. Restrictive covenants and policies elsewhere kept most blacks either in The Bayview or Fillmore neighborhoods. In July of 1945 The Atomic Bomb known as Little Boy was shipped from Hunters Point shipyard and eventually dropped on Japan, effectively ending WWII. The Navy Radiological Defense Laboratory decontamination center is established in 1946 for ships formerly involved in nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific. Radioactive paint is scraped from ships into the Bay by shipyard workers. The decontamination project ceased in 1969 after a significant budget cut.

**1974** – More than 3,000 workers, most them African Americans, lose their jobs when the Naval Shipyard abruptly closes. Statistical and anecdotal evidence attests to the astounding amounts of sickness and death among shipyard workers in the following decades to come. Anecdotal testimony from former employees of the Shipyard indicates, that the Navy conducted



radiological experimentation with animals, mainly horses and cows due to their large body mass. The purpose of these experiments was to calibrate the affects of radioactive exposure to humans. When the animals died from these experiments they were slaughtered and their carcasses were buried in ditches on the Shipyard site where housing develop is planned. In the past eleven months ten African American children died in their first year of life. These children lived in close proximity of the South Basin of the Hunters Point Shipyard near Parcel E and A, the toxic area slated for new housing development.

## SAN FRANCISCANS HAVE ALREADY SAID CLEAN UP ALL OF THE TOXINS BEFORE ANY DEVELOPMENT COMMENCES

In November of 2000 a huge majority of San Franciscans, 221,013, or 86.4%, voted for Proposition P, a Resolution which stated that the entire Hunter's Point Naval Shipyard, 493 acres of long-polluted land in southeast San Francisco, should be cleaned up by the U. S. Navy to 'unrestricted use' before the City of San Francisco accepted any transfer of Shipyard land from the Navy. Four years later—in December 2004— San Francisco's Board of Supervisors voted 9-2 to accept the transfer of Parcel A, 93 acres of Shipyard land, from the Navy so that the Florida-based Lennar Corporation could build and sell at least 1600 units of housing on this Parcel. Parcel A

remains contaminated by toxins left by the Navy. The four other land Parcels by A (B, C, D, and E) are even more contaminated. Accepting the transfer makes NO GOOD SENSE for the City of San Francisco's physical or financial health.

## PERSISTING POISONS

The Hunters Point Naval Shipyard remains a Superfund site. In 1989 the Environmental Protection Agency named it on of the 10 most polluted federal properties. On or nearby Parcel A contains the following poisons:

## IONIZING RADIATION

The 10-story former Naval Radiological Laboratory, Building 815, sits on Parcel C, less than 1/4 mile from Parcel A's intended 1600 or more units of housing. The NRDL operated between 1947-69. According to award-winning journalist Lisa Davis of S F Weekly, the NRDL's '2-million-volt Van de Graaf accelerator produced tremendous amounts of ionizing radiation.' In 2004 Breast Cancer Action and the Breast Cancer Fund in San Francisco found that the 'best-established environmental cause of breast cancer' is ionizing radiation. The San Francisco Bay Area has the highest incidence of breast cancer among measured metropolitan areas on Earth. The NRDL remains unremediated.

## METHANE GAS

In 2002 the U. S. Navy admitted that Parcel E's 46-acre landfill was emitting methane gas. Methane was later found be seeping from Parcels B and C, land that also borders

Parcel A. Methane carries volatile organic compounds and enhances asthma. San Francisco's high rates of asthma are highest in Bay View Hunters Point and in areas generally downwind of the Shipyard. Methane's continuing presence was one reason that the Bay View Hunters Point community's 24-member Restoration Advisory Board to the



**SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 14—FOR STUDY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEFENSE—**This windowless six-story, box like structure dedicated today at the San Francisco Naval Shipyard, is an \$8 million laboratory devoted exclusively to the development of defense against radiation—both "peaceful" radiation and that expectable in war. The laboratory will have a staff 515 civilians and 85 officers from various branches of the armed services. (AP WIREPHOTO, 1955)

Navy, OPPOSES TRANSFER OF PARCEL A BEFORE COMPLETE REMEDIATION OF THE SHIPYARD.

## THE PARCEL E LANDFILL

Contents and in fact depths of the 46-acre landfill in Parcel E remain unknown. This admitted dump for nuclear waste IS known to also contain benzene, chlorine, and radium dials as well as methane. On August 16, 2000 a fire broke out on and in the landfill. S F fire fighters abandoned the fire that day.

It burned and smoked for the next 7 weeks. The Navy—which had failed to acknowledge the fire at all to nearby residents during its first three weeks—until complaints by sick residents forced a dialogue. Many complained about a mysterious oddly colored smoke. Football fans at Candlestick's 3-Com Park reported smelling the acrid fumes. The Navy eventually incurred a \$25,000 fine from the EPA for failing to notify anyone that an underground fire was raging for weeks in the toxic Hunters Point landfill. Later it applied a plastic cap to the landfill. Today, the landfill remains unplumbed by the Navy, the City or the Lennar Corporation. Scientific evidence shows that a major seismic event could produce a volcano like or flood of radiation and poisonous gas through LIQUEFACTION if a 1906-level earthquake struck San Francisco.

## CESIUM and RADIUM

In 2003 cancer-causing cesium and radium were found in Building 366, a space for artists at the Shipyard, at levels of radioactivity 'as much as six times higher than what is legally acceptable on property the military would place in civilian hands' (SF Weekly, 10/1/03). Around the same time: 'Work on another shipyard

radiation site, Building 253, recently ceased after researchers found more extensive radioactive contamination than previously had been suspected.

## THE \$1 DEAL or THE \$1 STEAL?

Financial terms of the Parcel A transfer are bad for the City of San Francisco. The Lennar

Corporation is to receive more than 50% of its costs for infrastructure on Parcel A and elsewhere on the Shipyard (streets, sewers, etc.) through at least \$40 MILLION in bonds paid by San Francisco residents (San Francisco Redevelopment Agency 3/3/05). When infrastructure work is done Lennar can then sell the land to itself and reap 100% of further profits. Notwithstanding, the land was sold to Lennar for just \$1.00! Lennar will also be free of risk from

lawsuits over environmental problems during its development due to insurance emplaced through expected revenue from land-sales by Lennar.

## WHAT WE CAN DO TO PROTECT OUR HEALTH

Please remember that in landmass, our city is less than 50 square miles in diameter. Although the Shipyard is located in the Southeast section of the city it remains radioactive and highly toxic and represents a real and present danger to ALL San Francisco. We ask that you go to our website and donate a minimum of \$1.00 to \$1,000 and/or join San Franciscans for Our City's Health by volunteering some of your time and talent to this important cause, which will enable us to continue our grassroots efforts to warn potential homebuyers of Parcel A and the general public of a potential environmental catastrophe. The Shipyard in its present state is NOT FIT FOR HUMAN HABITATION! Building houses on Parcel A represents a threat not only to people residing in the immediate area of the Shipyard, but a potential danger to every resident of this city, including our neighbors in every direction throughout the Bay Area. For more information, please contact us at: **San Franciscans for Our City's Health 4909 Third Street, San Francisco, CA 94124. E-mail hunterspointnavalshipyard.com**

## ORGANIZATIONS

All Islanders Gathering As One  
Community First Coalition  
Mama Earth (Zine)  
Mo' Better Foods  
Residential Builders Association  
San Francisco Tenants Union  
San Francisco Bay View Newspaper  
Save Our Ecology  
Green Action  
African American Builders  
Hunter's View Tenants Assoc.

## INDIVIDUALS

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Ted Gullicksen	Mark Sanchez
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