

## 2229 Main Street Oversight Committee

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The 2229 Main Street Oversight Committee was formed to monitor the cleanup at Starmet, formerly Nuclear Metals, Inc. (NMI), a former defense contractor that is now a superfund site. In 2005, two major activities have been happening at the site: a remedial investigation of contamination outside the buildings and removal of barrels of waste material that were stored.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is managing the cleanup and overseeing the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS). The investigation will determine the extent of the contamination at the site and the pathways by which the public may be exposed. The feasibility study will develop possible cleanup strategies. The EPA has hired the consulting firm *de maximis inc.* to conduct the RI/FS. The first round of soil and water samples were taken and evaluated this year. This site is known to be contaminated with depleted uranium, beryllium, and other laboratory chemicals. Surprisingly, the first round of tests revealed PCBs in a few isolated locations. The major plume of uranium in the ground above the bedrock has also been identified heading from the holding basin, under the buildings, and towards the Assabet River. Additionally, some high levels of natural uranium have been found in some bedrock wells.

The committee and Citizen's Research and Environmental Watch (CREW) have been working with the EPA and its contractors to develop the workplan for the second round of samples that will look into PCB contamination and further clarify the way uranium is moving through the soil and in the groundwater. New wells have been installed and some of the soil samples associated with the second round of the investigation have already been collected this fall. The committee is also looking into whether some off-site soil samples would be useful.

Another important part of the cleanup is the removal of 3700 drums of uranium waste that are stored inside the Starmet buildings. This summer, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection contracted with Envirocare to package, transport, and dispose of the barrels and containers of depleted uranium waste. The Concord Fire Department participated in planning for this effort, and the committee and CREW commented on the plans. The drums and containers will be packaged into special transport containers inside the building and then tested to be sure that no radiation or contamination can get out of the transport package. The packaged drums are then loaded into trucks and driven to a disposal site in Utah. Currently, two trucks each day transport waste out of Concord, and the fire department is notified when trucks leave the site. We expect the removal to be completed in 2006.

In the coming year the committee hopes to set up a web site on the Town's web page that shows links to sites that have current and historical information. The committee does not have control over the content of these sites:

- [www.nmisite.org](http://www.nmisite.org) is the website created by the contractor de maximis. It includes a list of the current activities at the site, including data and maps from the sampling that has been completed.
- The EPA also has a website with historical information. Go to [www.epa.gov/region1/superfund/findsite/fndindex.htm](http://www.epa.gov/region1/superfund/findsite/fndindex.htm) and search for "Nuclear Metals".
- [www.crewconcord.org](http://www.crewconcord.org) is the website for the environmental advocacy group CREW.