

128th Air Refueling Wing

PUB-RR-807

January, 2009

128th Air Refueling Wing

1919 E. Grange Ave.
Milwaukee, WI
Milwaukee County

20 Acres

**Location: General Mitchell International
Airport**

**Local Air National Guard personnel
worked with the DNR to clean up
contamination and expand refueling
operations at their Milwaukee base.**

History

Since 1947, men and women have served the state of Wisconsin as members of the Wisconsin Air National Guard. For nearly 50 of those years, Guard members fulfilled their missions as part of the 128th Air Refueling Wing. Based in Milwaukee, this wing is dedicated to keeping U.S. military aircraft refueled and flying all across the globe. The Wisconsin Air National Guard has supported many important military operations during its existence, including recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

When the 128th is not flying refueling missions, their massive KC-135 aircraft which sit at their home base at General Mitchell International Airport. Over the decades, hundreds of thousands of gallons of jet fuel passed through the base, and some times during the refueling

process this fuel has spilled on and around the concrete parking area (or "apron") where the aircraft are serviced.

Investigation and Cleanup

Contaminated soil became an issue when the Refueling Wing was looking to expand the apron to accommodate additional tankers.

Examinations of the soil on portions of the 128th's property revealed high levels of Petroleum contamination, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), petroleum



KC-135R Stratotankers sit on the apron at General Mitchell Field, home of the 128th Air Refueling Wing of the Wisconsin Air National Guard (photo courtesy Wisconsin Air National Guard).



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Remediation and Redevelopment Program

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volatile organic chemicals (PVOCs) and diesel range organics (DROs). Soil contamination posed a public health threat; however, the contamination fortunately did not pose a risk to groundwater.

Since no major development was planned for the site and there appeared to be minimal risk to groundwater, the DNR allowed the soil to remain under the protective layer created by the base's concrete apron.

Redevelopment

With approval from the DNR's Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program, the concrete apron was resurfaced and extended. Not only did this protect Air Guard personnel from potential exposure, it also gave the 128th a larger surface to expand the scope of their operations.

Financial, Liability, Technical Assistance

The RR Program provided oversight and monitored completion of the remediation project. Upon satisfactory completion, the Air National Guard was issued a closure letter, indicating no further remediation was necessary.

In addition, a cap maintenance plan was established to ensure that the concrete apron covering the soil remained intact, preventing potential future exposure to contaminated soil.

Contacts

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DNR staff assisted the Wisconsin Air National Guard in meeting environmental regulations while expanding the concrete apron where the aircraft are parked (photo courtesy Wisconsin Air National Guard).

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