

Malmstrom Air Force Base

Great Falls, Montana

Permit number MTHWP-12-01

FACILITY FACT SHEET

[Location Map](#)

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Malmstrom Air Force Base (MAFB) is located on the eastern city limits of Great Falls, Montana. The base was established in 1942 and covers approximately 3,500 acres. The Missouri River is about one mile north of the base.

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REGULATORY BACKGROUND

Laws and Regulations

The Montana Hazardous Waste Act (MHWA) is the Montana equivalent of the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). MHWA and RCRA are state and federal laws that govern proper management and disposal of hazardous waste, including permit requirements for certain treatment, storage, and disposal activities. Hazardous waste permits are effective for up to 10 years, and may be reissued.

Owners/operators of facilities with hazardous waste permits are required to investigate and cleanup historical releases of hazardous waste and hazardous constituents present on the facility property. In addition, off-site contamination that originates from the facility must also be addressed.

The MAFB Hazardous Waste Permit

A hazardous waste permit was initially issued to MAFB in 1989, reissued in 2001, and again in 2012. The permit allows storage of hazardous waste in an on-site storage building for one year. In addition, MAFB must conduct facility-wide investigation and cleanup of hazardous waste and/or hazardous constituents that may have been released to environmental media (soil, sediment, groundwater and surface water).

HAZARDOUS WASTE STORAGE BUILDING

MAFB's permit allows storage of hazardous waste in an on-site storage building for up to one year. The storage building is 2,400 square feet, with separate bays and closets for waste storage. The building is equipped with fire suppressant systems and spill containment for each bay and closet. The storage building stores various types of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes generated on the base and at other facilities under the control of MAFB, such as missile alert and launch control facilities. Hazardous wastes include solvent wipes used for weapons cleaning, paint stripper and thinner, acids and bases, pesticides, and some medical wastes from the on-base pharmacy. MAFB also uses the building for storage of mercury-containing light bulbs, and batteries, and other non-hazardous wastes.

As required by the hazardous waste permit, MAFB must properly store and maintain waste containers, conduct routine inspections, and train personnel in hazardous waste management. Security devices and emergency equipment must be maintained in the building, and the building must be closed according to regulatory requirements when the building is no longer in operation.



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SITE INVESTIGATION AND CLEANUP

During an initial site assessment by EPA and MAFB, twenty-six areas were identified that required some degree of investigation and remediation. Contaminants are primarily petroleum-contaminated soils from leaking underground petroleum storage tanks and piping, lead-contaminated soils from artillery ranges, and chlorinated compounds in groundwater beneath a closed base landfill. Corrective measures included excavation and treatment of contaminated soils, excavation, stabilization, and off-site disposal of lead-contaminated soils, and in-situ treatment of groundwater at the landfill site. To date, twenty-five areas have been cleaned up or referred to Montana DEQ's Petroleum Site Response Program for further action. Groundwater remediation continues at the closed landfill until contaminant levels meet Montana water quality standards.



Installing a groundwater in-situ treatment system

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CURRENT STATUS

Facility-Wide Investigation and Cleanup

MAFB has completed all phases of facility-wide investigation and implemented cleanup measures at twenty six areas. MAFB is required to investigate and implement cleanup measures, as necessary if new areas of contamination or releases are discovered.

Hazardous Waste Storage Building

MAFB continues to properly manage and store hazardous waste in the hazardous waste storage building.

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PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Throughout the cleanup process, the DEQ will keep the public informed through notices of public meetings and public comment periods in area newspapers.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION



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