FACT SHEET
Hunters Point Naval Shipyard
Parcel C Radiological Deck Marker Recovery
September 2023

This fact sheet discusses information about the recent recovery of a deck marker in a secured area on Parcel C at Hunters Point Naval Shipyard (HPNS).

Radiological Retesting at HPNS

In late 2017, Navy completed an evaluation of past radiological data in identified areas at HPNS and determined this data to be unreliable. Since 2020, the Navy has been collecting new radiological data in those identified areas to ensure cleanup is protective of public health and the environment. The data includes soil samples from trench excavations, soil borings, and former building areas. Retesting fieldwork at Parcel C began in August 2022 and is ongoing. To date, 40% of the planned trenches in Parcel C have been excavated and sampled.

Recovery at Parcel C

On August 24, 2023, a reading was detected during a routine scan conducted of excavated material from trench unit (TU) - 315 at Parcel C. A mobile radiation detection system identified the reading in excavated soil from TU-315 on a radiological screening yard (RSY) pad in a secure area. In compliance with established work plans, the location was marked off for further investigation.

How was the deck marker found?

Upon further investigation, a historical deck marker, approximately 1.5-inches in diameter, was found intact 2-inches below the surface in loose soil on the RSY pad. Surrounding soil samples were taken for further analysis. Static gamma counts and dose-rate readings were collected before the item was bagged, labeled, and placed in a lead-lined safe inside a secure, on-site trailer.

Is the community at risk?

No. Parcel C is not accessible to the public. The deck marker was found in a radiologically-controlled area within a secure, active cleanup site at HPNS and does not pose a risk to members of the community. The Navy's health and safety protocols ensured worker safety during recovery and removal of the deck marker.

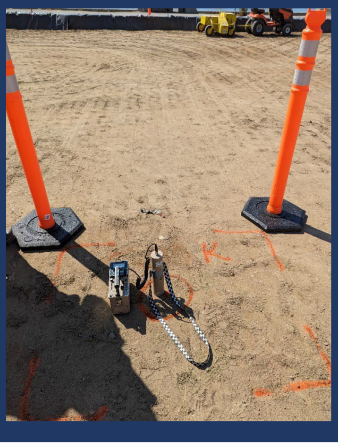
The relative dose of radiation from the deck marker is low, at 1.9 millirem annually if a person were to sit or lay down on top of the location for 8 hours per day for 1 year. This annual exposure is roughly equivalent to a single six-hour flight from New York to California.

How can you get answers to your radiological health and safety questions?

Dr. Kathryn Higley is an internationally recognized expert in radiological health and safety. She is a resource to the community for radiological health and safety information, especially as it relates to HPNS.

Members of the community may contact Dr. Higley directly by phone (541-737-0675) or email (kathryn.higley@oregonstate.edu). She is also available during scheduled office hours (scan the QR code to register).

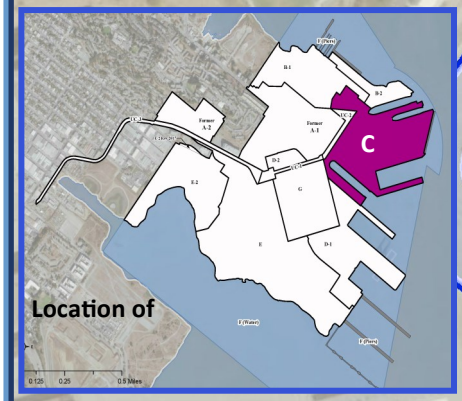
This image shows the location where the deck marker was identified before it was removed. It is located on an RSY pad within a restricted area.

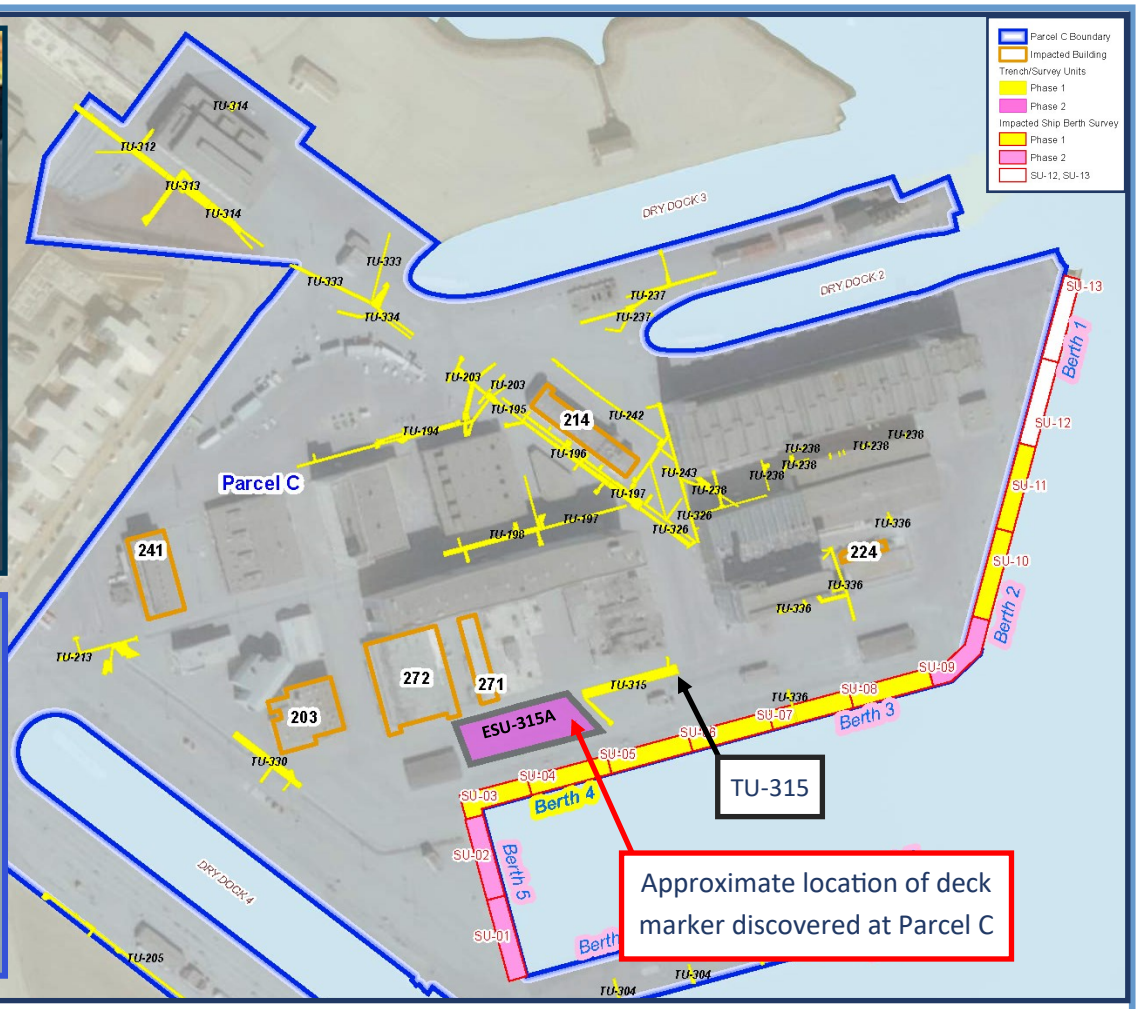


Scan the QR code for HPNS resources.

- Join the mailing list
- Link to the Navy website
- Register for guided bus tours
- Sign up for Technical Advisor office hours

Image of deck marker found at Parcel C





Historical Use of Deck Markers

What is a deck marker?

To mark the edges of aircraft carrier ship decks at night, glowing discs that provided low level light sources were attached to the ship at regular intervals by two screws. The Navy historically used these discs, known as “deck markers,” on ships that came to the Hunters Point drydocks during World War II.

What is radium?

Radium is a chemical element with the symbol “Ra” and atomic number 88. It is included in the Periodic Table of Elements in the alkaline earth metals group. It is naturally present in the environment in small amounts in rocks and soil and is also present in man-made sources. During the early 1900s through mid-century, it was common practice to add radium to paint to make items glow in the dark.

Before the effects of radiation exposure were well understood, radium was used in everyday items, including toys, nightlights, wristwatch dials, and clock faces.

How did deck markers get onto HPNS property?

Radioluminescent (glow-in-the-dark) items that were typically used by the Navy included switches, volt meters, deck markers, and safety ropes. While ships were in dry dock at HPNS, deck markers and other items were removed and/or replaced during normal ship maintenance activities.

How is the public affected by deck markers?

The amount of radiation exposure from a deck marker on a ship or on the ground is very low. Direct exposure to deck markers on HPNS today is unlikely.

有关海军在猎人角海军造船厂的清理活动方案的更多信息，
请拨打 (833) 350-6222 并留言。

Para más información sobre el programa de limpieza de la Marina en Hunters Point Naval Shipyard, favor de dejar un mensaje en (833) 202-5888.

www.bracpmo.navy.mil/hpns **info@sfhpns.com** **(415) 295-4742**