National Aeronautics and Space Administration

History

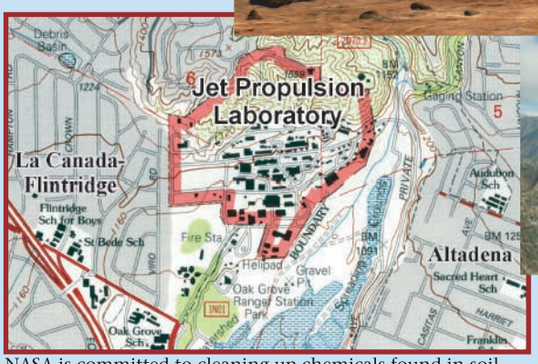
Today at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) engineers and scientists develop and use robotic spacecraft for NASA's exploration of the solar system.

In the 1940s and 1950s, wastes from JPL were collected in ground seepage pits. Later in the 1950s, waste management practices changed:

- ► A sewer system was installed
- ► Seepage pits stopped being used

Some chemicals disposed in the seepage pits have been found in soil and groundwater beneath JPL and in nearby groundwater.

Developed at JPL, NASA's "Spirit" rover landed on Mars in January, 2004.



NASA is committed to cleaning up chemicals found in soil and groundwater beneath and near JPL from past disposal practices that stopped decades ago.

The Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) is located on a 176-acre site in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains near Pasadena, California.

What are these chemicals?

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)
A group of chemicals widely used in industry, primarily as cleaning solvents.

Perchlorate
A chemical used as an ingredient in solid rocket fuel, fireworks, flares, dyes and fertilizers.

Altadena and Pasadena water supply officials continue to provide safe, clean drinking water to their communities.

Making Progress with CERCLA

In 1992, the cleanup effort at JPL became regulated by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), sometimes called Superfund. CERCLA requires a set of specific site investigations and evaluations - a process that can take years of work before cleanup is done. CERCLA gives the public opportunities for review and comment.

Learn more about CERCLA at www.EPA.gov/superfund, or

Get regular updates on NASA's JPL CERCLA cleanup at http://JPLwater.nasa.gov.