

U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT

REGION V

Report No. 81-02

License No. 04-00181-04

Priority 3

Category G1

Licensee: Veterans Administration Center
Wilshire and Sawtelle Boulevards
Los Angeles, California

Inspection at: Wadsworth Hospital Waste Burial Sites A, B and C

Inspection Conducted: May 7, 1981

Inspectors:

G. S. Spencer
G. S. Spencer, Director
Division of Technical Inspection

5/19/81
Date Signed

H. E. Book
H. E. Book, Chief
Radiological Safety Branch

5/20/81
Date Signed

R. D. Thomas
R. D. Thomas, Chief
Materials Radiation Protection Section

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L. Camper
L. Camper, NRC Materials Licensing Branch

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Summary:

Inspection of Waste Burial Sites A, B and C on May 7, 1981 (Report No. 81-02)
Former land burial sites which had been used for disposal of licensed material were surveyed. The locations of the three burial sites A, B and C are shown on Attachment A. An area survey was conducted using instrumentation capable of detecting minute quantities of gamma ray emitting materials.

The inspection of the waste disposal area involved a total of six hours on site by five NRC inspectors.

Results: The radiation levels detected at randomly selected locations within the burial sites indicated only background readings. See paragraph 4. for more details.

DETAILS

1. Persons Contacted

Mr. Leonard Wetterau, Nuclear Medicine Service Radiation Safety Officer
Mr. Thomas Keenan, Chief Engineer, V. A., L.A.
Ms. Kay Slavkin, Field representative to Congressman Anthony Beilenson
Ms. Joan Shaffran-Brandt, Legislative assistant to Anthony Beilenson
Ms. Claire Rogger, Deputy Councilman to Marvin Braude, 11th District,
City of Los Angeles

2. Background

The licensee buried low-level radioactive medical waste from about 1960 until 1968 at three locations which are on hospital controlled property. During this period of time, the burials were authorized by NRC regulations. The waste consisted primarily of short-lived medical radioisotopes, carbon-14, and tritium. The licensee recently contacted the NRC requesting a position or guidance on release of the property for conversion to a public park. The NRC Licensing Branch is presently making an evaluation study pertinent to the release of the burial sites.

3. Instruments Used

An Eberline Model PRM-7 micro-R meter with NRC #006383 was used during this survey. The instrument had a background of 6 micro-R per hour and is due for recalibration on or before March 30, 1982.

A Technical Associates Model PUG-1AB instrument with NRC #004279 was also used during this survey. The PUG-1AB was used with a gamma scintillation probe. The instrument had a background of 1200-1500 counts per minute and is due for recalibration on or before July 15, 1981.

4. Survey Results

A radiological survey was conducted on May 7, 1981 by NRC inspectors in areas A, B and C as shown on Attachment A to this report. Radiation measurements were taken at several locations on a random basis by placing the instruments at ground level and at varying heights up to five feet above the ground.

There were no radiation levels detected which were in excess of the natural radiation background levels particular to the instruments.

Based upon the results of the radiological survey conducted, there was no radioactive material detected.

5. Licensee Comments

Discussions with Mr. Thomas Keenan, Chief Engineer for the Veterans Administration in Los Angeles, stated that during the demolition of the old hospital, many yards of broken concrete, reinforcement steel and soil from the old hospital site were dumped on top of the burial sites. Mr. Keenan estimated that approximately 10 to 15 feet of the mixed debris and soil were placed on top of Area A, and Areas B and C were also covered with about 20 feet of the same material. Since the original burials were at a depth of 6 to 8 feet, the total depth presently would be approximately 20 to 30 feet due to the fill which has been added.

6. Description of Areas A, B and C

Attachment A indicates the locations of the burial sites in relation to the hospital proper, and the proposed park area. The nearest public access is Barrington Avenue which is located approximately 200 yards to the west of burial sites B and C. The overall area of sites A, B and C is overgrown with foxtail grass which is approximately 24 to 30 inches high. Pictorially, the areas can be seen in picture 1 (Area A), picture 2 (Area B), and picture 3 (Area C) which are included in this report.

It should be noted that only a small portion of the southeast corner of the proposed park area incorporates a portion of burial sites B and C.

7. Conclusions

- A. Based upon the results of the radiological survey conducted on May 7, 1981, there were no radioactive materials detected.
- B. Based upon the amount of fill material and dirt which has been added to the burial sites, the original burials are presently at a depth of 20 to 30 feet.
- C. Based upon the results of the radiological survey and the evaluation of the sites based upon observations made at the time of the inspection, it is recommended that the overall area be released for unrestricted use.

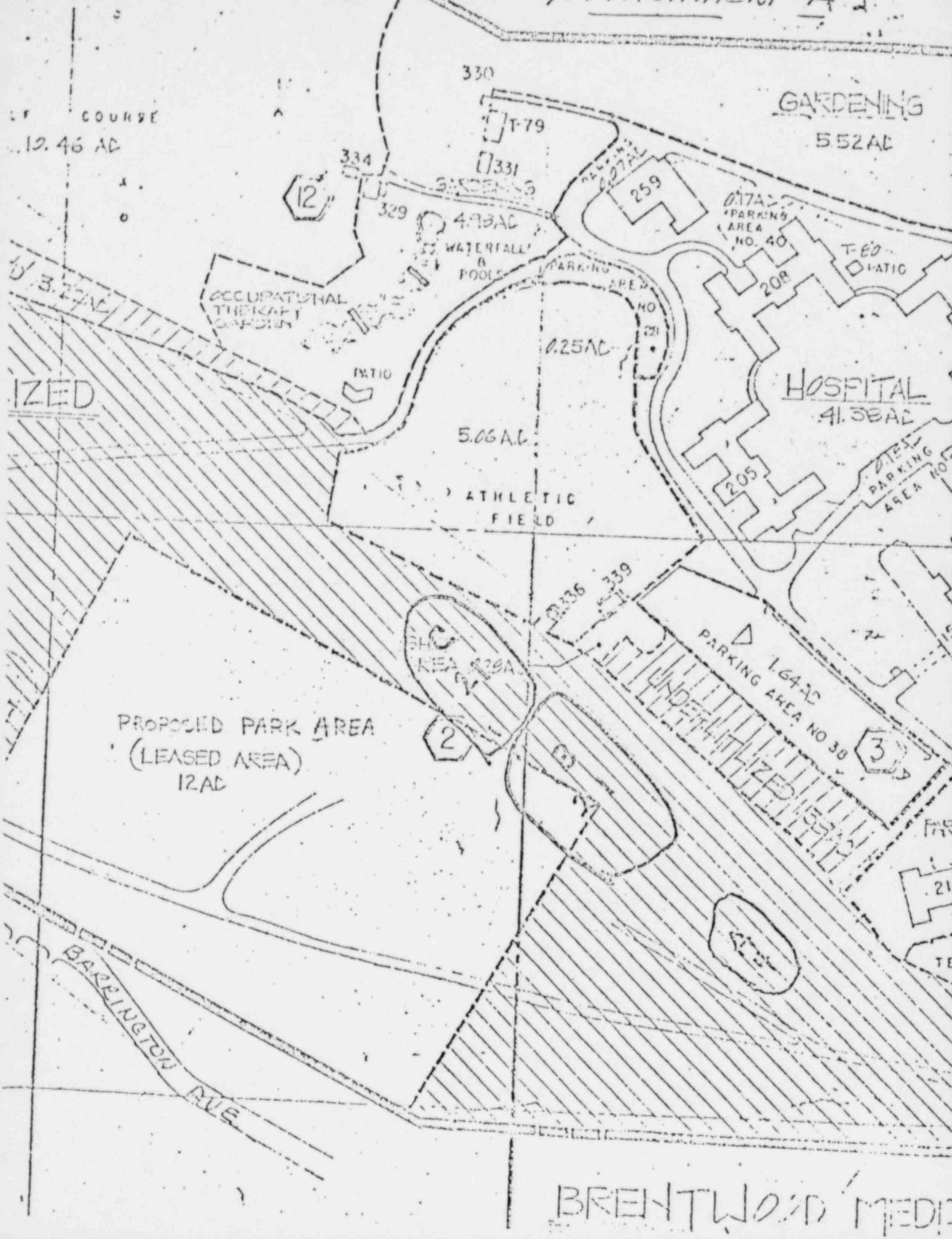
8. Exit Discussion

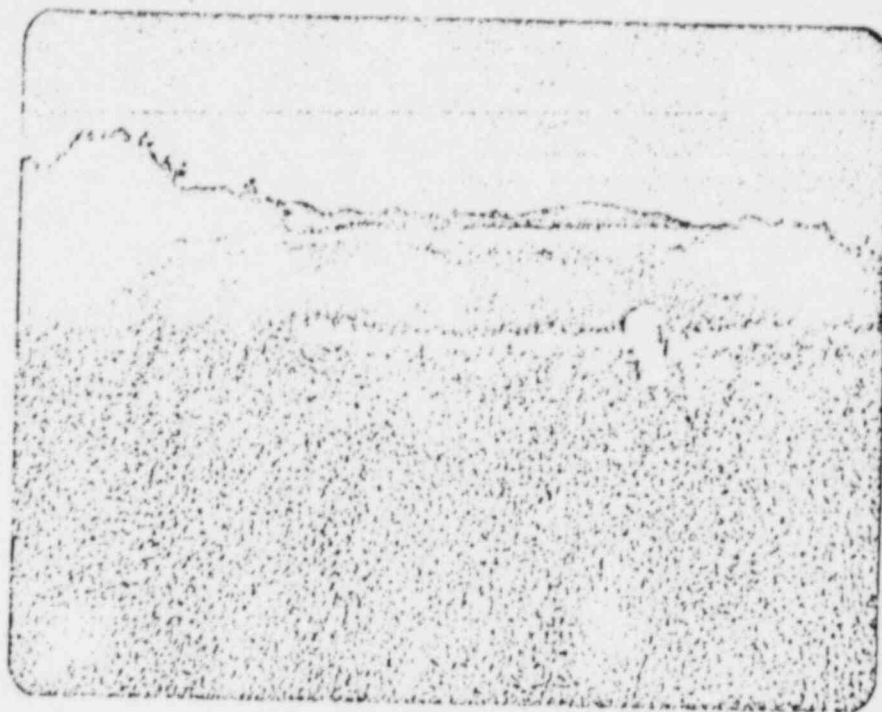
At the conclusion of the radiological survey, the above conclusions were discussed with those individuals listed in paragraph 1.

Three members of the "Committee to Bridge the Gap" were present on site during the time of the survey; however, they did not participate in the survey or in the final discussions.

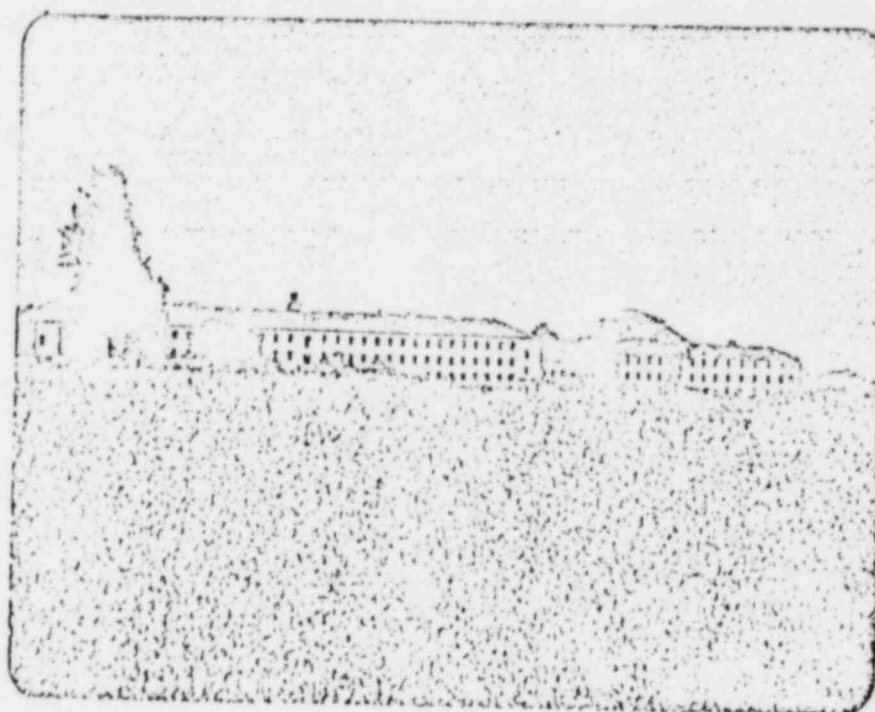
LF COURSE
12.46 AC

GARDENING
5.52 AC

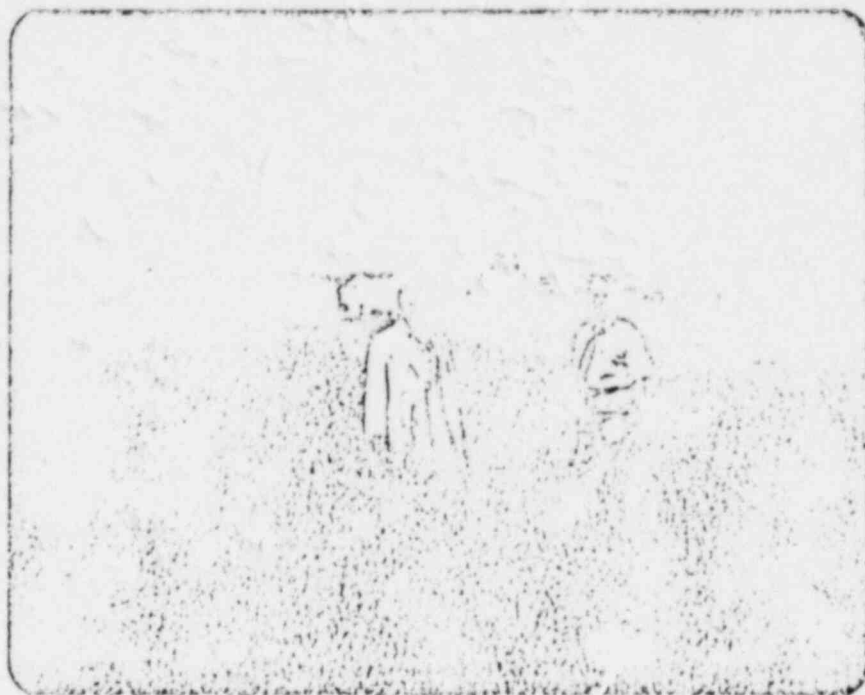




Picture 1
Area A



Picture 2
Area B



Picture 3
Area C

F COURSE

10.46 AC

GARDENING

552 AC

12

330

T-79

331

GARDENING

4.93 AC

WATERFALL & POOLS

PARKING AREA NO 28

2.25 AC

5.06 AC

ATHLETIC FIELD

PARKING AREA NO 40

T-60

PATIO

HOSPITAL

41.38 AC

PARKING AREA NO 27

ZED

LEASED AREA
12 AC

AREA 21

2

3

PARKING AREA NO 30

3

PARK

21'

TEN

BRENTWOOD MEDIC