INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY/DISTRICT
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property/District Name: Pilot Plant Complex E5625 Survey Number: HA-2012

Project: Proposed Demolition of Complex Agency: F/Army

Site visit by MHT Staff: X no ___ yes Name _____ Date _____

Eligibility recommended ____ Eligibility **not** recommended x

Criteria: ___A ___B ___C ___D Considerations: ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G ___None

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)

The Pilot Plant Complex located at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground currently consists of nine buildings, seven of which were constructed in the 1942 for impregnite production. Impregnite was a chemical used to coat soldiers' uniforms to protect them from dangerous chemical weapons. Impregnite plants were constructed in Michigan, Illinois, New York and at Edgewood utilizing the same construction design. By 1941, all plants were operational except Edgewood which began production in 1942. The Pilot Plant only operated as an impregnite production facility for approximately a year. The complex sat idle through most of World War II. While the Army established new arsenals during and after WWII, the Edgewood facility was used for chemical research and development. However, the activities at the Pilot Plant did not result in any significant discovery or process. The buildings have been altered throughout their history to accommodate the production of new compounds for arfare purposes. The integrity of the original plant function and design has been lost. At least three of the original buildings have been demolished. Two of the existing buildings were demolished and rebuilt in the 1960s. Vacant since 1986, a lack of maintenance has resulted in building deterioration.

As a result of international treaty negotiations to ban chemical warfare, the Pilot Plant is slated for demolition. Additional justification for demolition focuses on the chemical contamination of the site. I concurred with the Army's determination that the complex was not eligible for the National Register.

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: Building E5625 Complex Pilot Plant Historical Survey report

Prepared by: Roger W. Anderson, Jr. & Theresa C. Kvitek, Argonne National Laboratory

Lauren L. Bowlin — 10/95
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services — Date

NR program concurrence: ✓ yes ___ no ___ not applicable

Reviewer, NR program — 11-30-95
Date

Survey No. HA-2012

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA - HISTORIC CONTEXT

I. Geographic Region:

____	Eastern Shore	(all Eastern Shore counties, and Cecil)
____	Western Shore	(Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's and St. Mary's)
X	Piedmont	(Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery)
____	Western Maryland	(Allegany, Garrett and Washington)

II. Chronological/Developmental Periods:

____	Paleo-Indian	10000-7500 B.C.
____	Early Archaic	7500-6000 B.C.
____	Middle Archaic	6000-4000 B.C.
____	Late Archaic	4000-2000 B.C.
____	Early Woodland	2000-500 B.C.
____	Middle Woodland	500 B.C. - A.D. 900
____	Late Woodland/Archaic	A.D. 900-1600
____	Contact and Settlement	A.D. 1570-1750
____	Rural Agrarian Intensification	A.D. 1680-1815
____	Agricultural-Industrial Transition	A.D. 1815-1870
____	Industrial/Urban Dominance	A.D. 1870-1930
X	Modern Period	A.D. 1930-Present
____	Unknown Period (___ prehistoric	___ historic)

III. Prehistoric Period Themes:

____	Subsistence
____	Settlement
____	Political
____	Demographic
____	Religion
____	Technology
____	Environmental Adaptation

IV. Historic Period Themes:

____	Agriculture
____	Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning
____	Economic (Commercial and Industrial)
____	Government/Law
X	Military
____	Religion
____	Social/Educational/Cultural
____	Transportation

V. Resource Type:

Category: building complex

Historic Environment: village (military installation)

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): industrial/ chemical plant

Known Design Source: Standardized plans but no source Corps of Engineers?

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ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY

9700 South Cass Avenue, Argonne, Illinois 60439

Telephone 708/252-6406
Fax 708/252-6407

May 19, 1995

Commander, United States Army
Aberdeen Proving Ground Support Activity
Attention: Mr. Douglas R. MacMillan
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21005

Dear Mr. MacMillan:

Recently as part of the Pilot Plant (Building E5625 complex) project in the Edgewood area of Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) being conducted by Argonne National Laboratory (ANL), I completed a report entitled *Building E5625 Complex, Pilot Plant, Aberdeen Proving Ground — Edgewood Area, Maryland. Interim Report: Historical Survey* (February 1995) which was given to Mr. John Wrobel. This document details the history of the E5625 complex. The report focuses on the historical setting, history of usage of the buildings, and architectural history, that is, architectural changes to the buildings. The report is designed to provide information for determining the historical status of the structures and the likelihood of the presence of archaeological material at the site. Enclosed is a copy of the report for your records.

The purposes of this letter are to convey a brief summary of the findings concerning the buildings and site and to request your comments concerning the preliminary negative findings regarding consideration of structures in the E5625 complex for the National Historic Register. Both purposes are intertwined in the following discussion and will be addressed throughout this letter.

The evaluation criteria for determining eligibility of structures for consideration for inclusion in the National Historic Register is outlined in 36 CFR 60. For the sake of completeness, the criteria will be reiterated here from the *National Register Bulletin* (15) page 2.

> The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and
>
> - That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
> - That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
> - That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
> - That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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These criteria are addressed in the following discussion.

The E5625 complex at Edgewood area of Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) today consists of nine buildings (see attached diagram of complex). The structures are E5616, E5617, E5618, E5621, E5625, E5626, E5627, E5632, and E5633. A photograph of each building from four different angles is enclosed. Pictures for each building are on a separate labeled sheet. (Two sets of the pictures are enclosed for your use.)

With the exception of E5626 and E5632, the structures were built in the 1940s. Each building over the course of more than 50 years has been used for several different operations, except for the two earlier named buildings. Building E5625 was the central laboratory structure in the complex where research and development activities were conducted. While E5625 and related support buildings were used to conduct innovative research on the application of new compounds for warfare purposes, there was probably no one significant discovery or new process or procedure which had a significant impact on the research and development community or chemical warfare community. Likewise, no outstanding or significant scientist, such as a noble laureate, has been mentioned as conducting research in the laboratories which led to such an award.

The structures in the E5625 complex are not uniquely designed or built solely for one specific purpose. Most of the buildings are identical to structures built in the late 1930s and early 1940s at other military research facilities such as Niagara Falls, New York, and Midland, Michigan. In fact, several of the available original blueprints and drawings for the structures built in the E5625 complex (original 87 complex) indicate that they are the same plans used at these other sites. The difference between sites is that at APG a different numbering system was employed.

The integrity of style and purpose of the E5625 complex has not been retained. Even though the buildings have not been moved from their original location, at least two buildings have been rebuilt or replaced. Also, not all of the structures built for the original purpose of producing CC2 for the World War II war effort are standing. In addition, since 1986, the buildings have not been maintained and are rather dilapidated. Architectural changes have been made over the years to the inside of buildings, altering the original style, and, in some cases, function. Thus, the buildings in the compound have not retained their original look and design.

The land on which the E5625 complex is built is a fill area adjacent to a wetland or swampy basin in the Bush River peninsula. Consequently, the land has been disturbed and the possibility of finding any archeological remains *in situ* is quite remote.

According to the summary information outlined above, the current structures in the E5625 complex, therefore, should not be considered for examination and evaluation for the National Historic Register. Similarly, the site itself should not be considered a possible location for discovering archeological material culture *in situ*. Therefore, it is unlikely that any significant person or event, distinctive architectural style nor special integrity of location or design, nor strong possibility of discovering any *in situ* archeological remains.

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As a result of the previous mentioned information, ANL is requesting on behalf of Mr. John Wrobel and Aberdeen Proving Ground, preliminary determination of the historical and archeological significance of the structures and site be made so that the project can proceed to plan for demolition of the structures in accordance with provisions under the current chemical weapons treaty.

Thank you for addressing these issues.

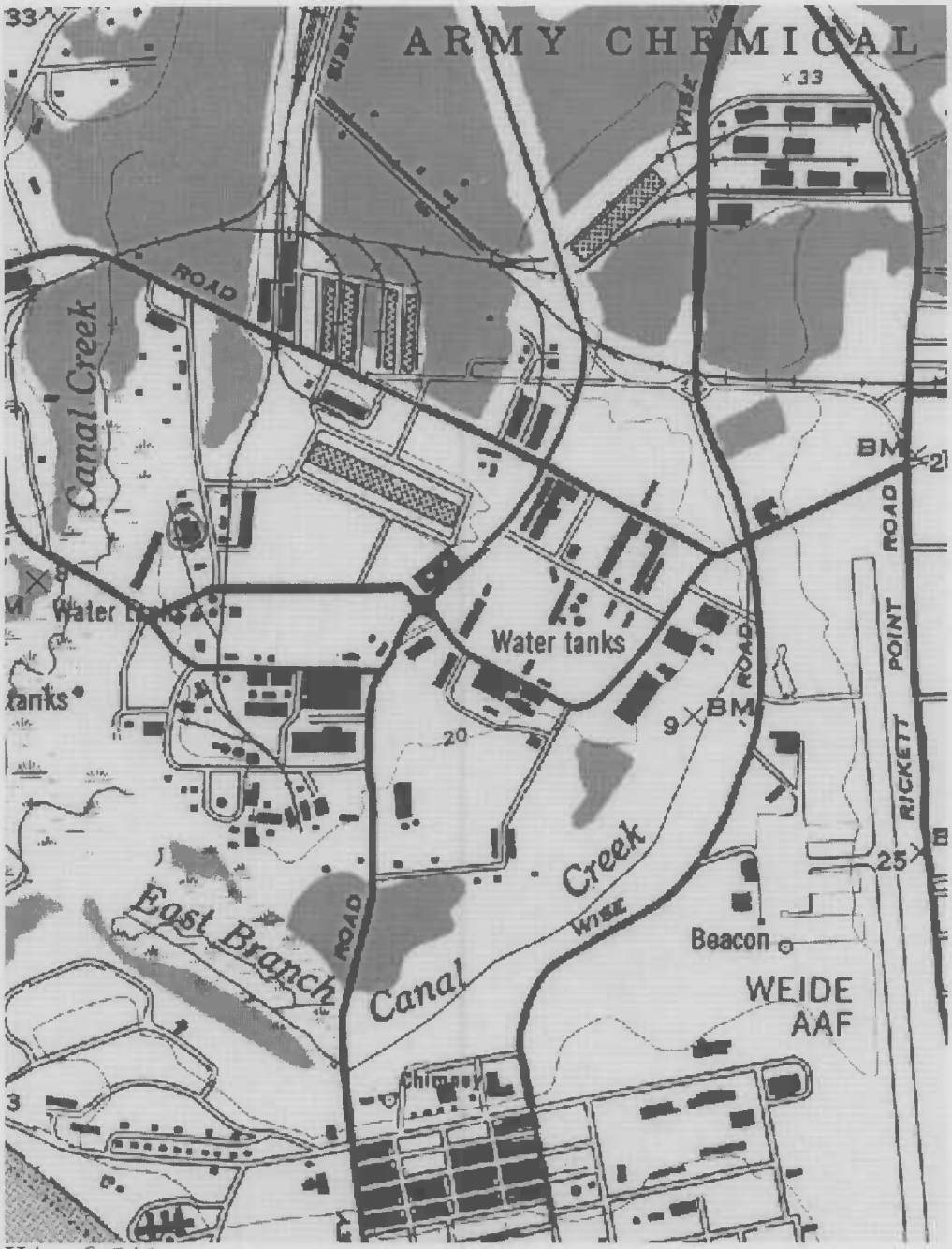
Sincerely,

Roger W. Anderson, Jr.

Roger W. Anderson, Jr., Ph.D.
Center for Environmental Restoration Systems
Energy Systems Division

RWA/amf
Enclosures

cc: D.E. Edgar/ANL



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Pilot Plant Complex E5625
Edgewood Area of Abredeen Proving Ground
Harford County
Edgewood Quad