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House Approves Funds For U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers To
Completely Excavate & Ship Thorium-Tainted Soil Out Of State

Washington, DC - Building on his major victory earlier this fall in which he persuaded the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to ship all of the contaminated soil from the Maywood Superfund site to a remote location out of state, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) today announced that he has secured Congressional approval of \$25.7 million for the project. The funds for excavating and shipping the thorium-tainted soil are included in the Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2004, which passed the U.S. House of Representatives today. The 20 remaining tainted, commercial sites are collectively known as the Maywood Superfund site, although they are located in Maywood, Lodi, and Rochelle Park.

"I am very pleased that I was able to get the federal government to continue to commit its resources to rid Maywood, Lodi, and Rochelle Park of all the remaining contaminated soil and ship it out of New Jersey," said Rothman, who is a member of the House Appropriations Committee, which allocates all of the discretionary money in the federal budget. "We've gotten the Army Corps to agree to ship all the contaminated soil out of state, and now I am pleased to announce \$25.7 million in federal funds that will help make this happen, thus improving the quality of life for area residents."

Following numerous appeals from Rothman, the Army Corps, which has control over the thorium-contaminated soil, agreed in September 2003 to the complete excavation and shipment remediation option that had been strongly preferred by the Congressman and area residents. The Army Corps has already excavated and shipped all of the soil from residential property in those three municipalities to a remote site in Utah.

"In addition to paying for all of this contaminated soil to be shipped out of our neighborhoods and state, these new federal funds will save local taxpayers \$25.7 million from the cleanup cost," said Rothman, who secured more than \$55 million for the Maywood Superfund site cleanup in the budgets for Fiscal Years 2002 and 2003.

From 1916-1956, Maywood Chemical Works processed monazite sand to extract thorium and rare earth minerals for use in manufacturing industrial products such as mantles for gas lanterns. During that time, a watery mixture containing waste from thorium processing operations was pumped to diked disposal ponds west of the plant. Some of the waste was removed from the plant for use as mulch and fill on nearby properties, thereby contaminating the properties with radioactive material, which also spread to Lodi and Rochelle Park.

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