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In letter to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Congressman says health of residents is of utmost importance
Maywood, NJ - Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) once again called on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to excavate all contaminated soil from 24 remaining commercial sites, and to dispose of the tainted soil out of state. Rothman that the U.S. Army Corps' preferred remediation proposal of soil separation is an unproven method that would do an inadequate job of completely ridding the area of thorium-tainted soil.

"There is a lack of convincing evidence that Alternative #4 (the U.S. Army Corps' preferred method) will work as designed and also a risk that this plan will slow remediation of the final 24 sites by drawing resources away from the project," Rothman wrote in a letter to Allen Roos, who is the U.S. Army Corps administrator in charge of the Maywood site. "The residents of Maywood want to ensure all contaminated soil, at any level, is removed. I share that goal."

The U.S. Army Corps is currently reviewing four alternatives for dealing with contamination from a former chemical plant at 24 non-residential sites in Maywood, Lodi, and Rochelle Park. The Corps already excavated and shipped all of the soil from residential property in those three municipalities to a remote site in Utah. The four alternatives currently under consideration for the remaining non-residential sites are: 1) taking no action; 2) monitoring the situation and instituting barriers that would prevent any contact with the contaminated soil; 3) excavating and disposing the contaminated soil offsite (Rothman's choice); 4) separating contaminated soil from uncontaminated soil and disposing only the former (U.S. Army Corps' choice) out of state.

"My obligation to my constituents of the 9th Congressional District of New Jersey is to ensure that the principal threat to the health of humans and to the environment - the radiological contamination in the soil - is eliminated in the most expeditious and cost-effective manner possible," Rothman wrote. "Nothing short of the removal of the contaminated soil would ensure that engineers did not miss a single speck of contaminated soil."

Rothman has contacted the U.S. Army Corps in the past to express his belief that all soil must be removed from the Maywood site. His letter to Allen Roos represents a formal documentation into the public record.

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[Go back](#)