



"DRUMS OF DEATH"

More than 17,000 tons of different types of poisonous gas were dumped off the East Coast in the 25 years following the end of World War II. Those containers have deteriorated over decades in salt water.

Could seismic airgun blasting trigger the release of these highly toxic chemical agents and radioactive waste? Do we even know for sure where these ocean dumps are located?

This alarm about new dangers posed by seismic blasting was sounded by Frank Knapp, President & CEO of the South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce. On April 20, Knapp announced the Chamber had submitted

supplemental comments to the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management calling for denial of permits for seismic surveys unless the federal government can demonstrate it knows where all disposed munitions and radioactive waste are located.

The Chamber has also filed a FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) request with the U.S. Defense Department and other agencies to obtain the facts about ammunition dumps in the Atlantic that contain conventional, chemical and radioactive weapons and materials.



In an earlier 2009 report, the **U.S. Defense Department** identified the general locations of 33 munition dump sites in the Atlantic, with five off the S.C. coast.

Chemical agents in these deposits include the chemical warfare weapons of lewisite, mustard gas, sarin and arsenic.

In 2013, the **Wall Street Journal** reported that its review of federal and other records shows there are questions about the exact locations, contents and condition of waste containers, along with concerns about potential threats to the environment and public health if seafood gets contaminated. Read [more here](#).



"Clearly, these drums of death...should not be disturbed for the same reasons of protecting the environment, sea life, beachgoers and others that enter the ocean and, of course, local coastal economies," writes Knapp.

Will our kids find bombs, mustard gas, radioactive waste barrels on our beaches?

This is not a far-fetched scenario. On April 24, the North Myrtle Beach Fire Department detonated a Civil War-era bomb discovered by construction workers building a new patio. The **Myrtle Beach Sun News** has a [video along with detailed coverage](#) of the ocean dump dangers.



Last September, a WWII-type naval bomb washed ashore at Cape Hatteras National Seashore, leading the National Park Service to shut down part of the park, and to warn beachgoers that "a variety of hazardous items may wash ashore" at the park during severe weather.

For more background information, take a look at local media coverage as well as 2017 and 2016 reports from Middlebury Institute and the Smithsonian.

Energy & Environment - [Lost bombs and buried toxins: New fears over oil exploration \(PDF file\)](#)

Savannah Now - [Oil exploration raises issue of undersea munitions, including Tybee bomb](#)

Hilton Head Island Packet - [Offshore drilling in SC Lowcountry just got scarier](#)

Post & Courier - [Tons of explosives, chemical weapons dumped offshore South Carolina](#)

Middlebury Institute, 2017 - [Chemical weapons dumped at sea: An Interactive Map](#)

Smithsonian Magazine, 2016 - [Chemical Weapons Dumped after WWII could threaten waters worldwide](#)

the group carries out all technical work and has the authority to make decisions on all matters relating to the group's work.

The group will be responsible for the following tasks:

- 1. To carry out the work assigned to it by the Board of Directors.
- 2. To prepare and submit to the Board of Directors the annual report on the group's work.
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