



# FACT SHEET

## Former Chanute Air Force Base History

Chanute Air Force Base, Ill., was established in 1917 as Chanute Field, making it one of the oldest Air Force facilities prior to its closure in 1993. Chanute began as a pilot training school during World War I, and after a brief closure following the end of the war, reopened as a technical training center.

Chanute AFB was recommended for closure by the U.S. Department of Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission in 1988. The base was officially closed Sept. 30, 1993. Today, the former Chanute AFB is one of 40 former installations managed by the Air Force Civil Engineer Center in San Antonio, Texas.

## Environmental Activities

AFCEC continues to work closely with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to ensure environmental cleanup activities satisfy all regulatory standards and protect human health and the environment. The Air Force has invested more than \$180 million on cleanup actions at the former installation. The cost to complete cleanup is another \$22.6 million.

Airmen at Chanute used hazardous materials while the base was open such as aviation and motor fuels; petroleum products such as motor oil, lubricants, and hydraulic fluids; and cleaning solvents. Hazardous wastes generated at Chanute AFB included waste oils and fuels, oil/water separator sludge, solvent residues and other chemical wastes. When the base closed, the Air Force collected hazardous wastes from all storage and designated accumulation points and disposed of them off-site at a permitted facility. Primary sources of hazardous substances involved either oil-water separators, underground storage tanks, sludge pits (or a combination of these items) and landfills.

AFCEC is required to investigate and clean up past releases of contamination that may pose unacceptable risks to human health and the environment. AFCEC implements these requirements under their Installation Restoration Program as well as state regulatory programs such as the Illinois Underground Storage Tank and Leaking UST programs.

The Air Force identified 81 IRP sites at Chanute. As of FY2013, 49 of these sites have been completely cleaned up and are suitable for unrestricted use (i.e., residential use). For the other 32 IRP sites, all necessary cleanup actions have been implemented and the sites are on track to be cleaned up by 2016. Once cleanup at Chanute is complete, all but five sites will be suitable for unrestricted use. Those sites are limited to four landfills and a former fire training area which will carry land use restrictions in perpetuity.

In addition to the 81 IRP sites, the Air Force and its regulatory partners have investigated and removed nearly 200 UST and oil/water separator sites resulting in the closure of all sites with no restrictions.

### **Property Transfer**

Today, the Village of Rantoul has attracted tenants in the fields of transportation and education, including Lincoln's ChalleNGe, an intensive, highly structured, alternative educational environment run by the Illinois National Guard designed to give at-risk youth a new start at becoming contributing members of their community. The former base is also home to the University of Illinois Advanced Transportation and Research Engineering Laboratory, or ATREL, one of the leading transportation research facilities in the nation.

The Air Force is on track to complete the transfer of Chanute by the end of FY2014.

### **Path Forward**

The Air Force and its partners will continue to work together to complete environmental cleanup for the benefit of the community.

### **For More Information**

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