

# Former Camp Elliott Training Area - FACT SHEET -

## Site Location

The part of the former Camp Elliott Training Area is now the Community of Tierrasanta (TS) and the Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP). It is situated to the Northeast of San Diego, bordered by Interstate 15 on the West, SR -52 on the north, SR125 on the East, and I-8 on the South.

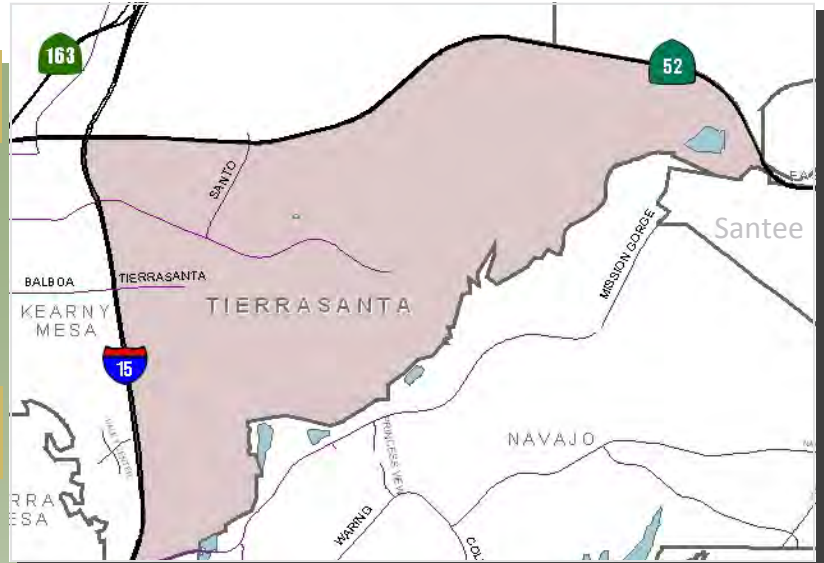
## Site History

Military use of this land began in 1917 and continued to 1960; most of this site was used as artillery and tank firing ranges. The munitions used ranged from 37 millimeter (mm) High Explosive (HE) to 155mm HE and shrapnel projectiles.

In 1961, the Navy declared 15,000 acres of the former Camp Elliott, including the area that became the TS community and MTRP, to be excess land. This land was sold over several years by the General Services Administration to real estate developers and private individuals. In addition, property was also transferred to local municipalities. The remainder of Camp Elliott was retained by the military and is part of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar. The TS and MTRP properties are two of four properties under the Formerly Used Defense Site program that were part of the excess lands from the former Camp Elliott.

## Investigation and Cleanup

Portions of the former Camp Elliott area have been subject to Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)/Munitions and Explosives of Concern (MEC) clearance actions. The U.S. Navy performed surface clearance in one area in 1964, the U.S. Marine Corps conducted surface clearance in another area in 1965, and the U.S. Army conducted a surface clearance of approximately 800 acres in 1973.



*Tierrasanta and Mission Trails Regional Park that were once part of Camp Elliott*

Unfortunately, even after the multiple surface clearances, two Tierrasanta boys were killed by the accidental detonation of a 37 mm HE projectile in 1983. As a result, surface clearance actions in two additional areas were conducted in 1984 and 1985 (approximately 326 acres and 322 acres, respectively) by the U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Mobile Unit Three.

Even though multiple surface clearances have been performed, there is still a potential for encountering MEC in the TS community and MTRP. To address this concern, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has developed numerous institutional controls (administrative and legal controls that help to minimize the potential for human exposure to hazards) including:

- MEC warning signs
- Education displays at the Tierrasanta Library and the MTRP Visitors Center
- Informational brochures/fact sheets
- UXO safety awareness training

Wherever a MEC warning sign (shown next page) has been placed, there is a greater than normal chance of encounter with MEC or UXO. The majority of the MEC signs have been installed in the Tierrasanta community because there are a large number of people who live, work and have more frequent access to the open space areas, compared to the limited access available to Mission Trails Regional Park visitors.



Examples of 37mm and 75mm UXO items



Mission Trails Warning Sign



Tierrasanta UXO Warning Sign

Informational brochures and fact sheets regarding the MEC hazard risks to the public have been distributed to the schools, libraries, park visitors, and other interested parties.

Currently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, is performing a 5-year Review of the former Camp Elliott for Tierrasanta and Mission Trails to evaluate whether previously implemented munitions response actions continue to minimize explosives safety risks and are protective of human health and safety and the environment.

While your potential of encountering MEC is slim, you should be wary of any type of old metal you might find at the Mission Trails Regional Park and within the Tierrasanta community. The objects of concern include MEC items such as mortar and artillery rounds, bazooka rockets, torpedoes, mines, dynamite, blasting caps, small arms ammunition, rifle and hand grenades. These items may contain high explosives and are dangerous regardless of their age because MEC retains its explosive potential. With time, some of these items can become more sensitive and detonation possibly can occur with the slightest touch causing severe injury or death.

## BE ALERT!

- Stay on established roads and trails
- Read all informational park displays and warning signs
- Do not touch anything suspicious
- Place something nearby to mark the location
- **Call 911!**

## Recognize

Recognize when you may have encountered a munition. Do not touch or pick up suspicious items, whether they are whole or in fragments.

## Retreat

Mark a location near the item and carefully move away on the same path you entered on—do not run.

## Report

**Call 911!** Notify local law enforcement that you have found a suspect ordnance item. Tell them what you saw and where you saw it.

Additional information regarding Camp Elliott can be found at:

[www.hnd.usace.army.mil](http://www.hnd.usace.army.mil)

The information repository within the:

*Tierrasanta Branch Library*  
4985 La Cuenta Drive  
San Diego, CA 92124

For more safety information visit the UXO Safety Education Website:

<https://www.denix.osd.mil/uxosafety>

and the Formerly Used Defense Sites Program Website:

[https://environment.usace.army.mil/what\\_we\\_do/fuds](https://environment.usace.army.mil/what_we_do/fuds)

