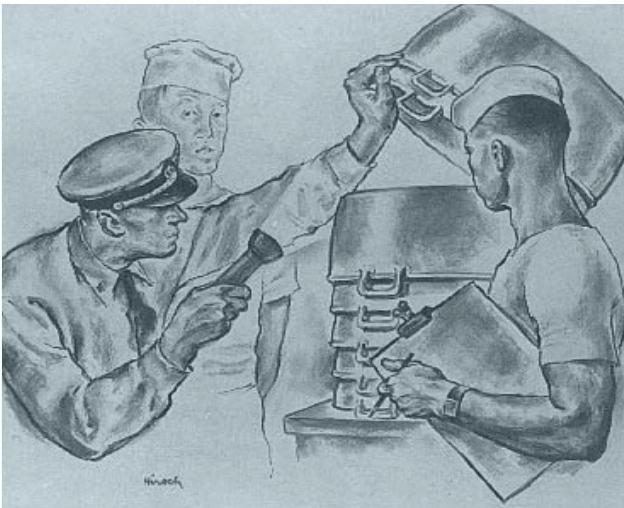




## THE ADVENT OF FORCE HEALTH PROTECTION EPIDEMIC DISEASE CONTROL

- In World War I, **Navy laboratory and sanitation units** were deployed aboard ships and to shore facilities to perform public health and preventive medicine duties such as fighting outbreaks of meningitis and influenza.
- Beginning in 1941, these teams were reestablished as “epidemiological and sanitary units” (or epidemiology units). Across the United States, these units **conducted research and control measures in respiratory diseases, led studies on rheumatic fever and gastro-enteric diseases and contributed to the control of epidemics of meningitis and diphtheria.**
- After the war, these teams were consolidated and renamed Epidemic Disease Control Units (ECDUs). Today they are known as **Navy Environmental Preventive Medicine Units (NEPMUs).**



### SENTINELS OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

- On **March 10, 1949**, the Navy consolidated the duties of four remaining World War II epidemiology teams (Nos. 13, 24, 80 and 100) under five **Epidemic Disease Control Units (EDCU)** in **Norfolk, Va.** (No. 2), **Camp Lejeune, N.C.** (No. 3), **Great Lakes, Ill.** (No. 4), **San Diego, Calif.** (No. 5), and **Pearl Harbor, Va.** (No. 6). In 1957, unit No. 7 was established in Naples, Italy.
- These units **investigated outbreaks of disease stateside and overseas**; conducted sanitary inspections and surveys for disease vectors; and oversaw the sanitary control of food, water, waste disposal, and living quarters, among other activities.
- Then, as now, these units often executed their missions **in collaboration with an assortment of federal agencies as well as health departments of various states, cities, territories and foreign countries.**

“The peacetime necessity for epidemic control teams . . . somewhat parallels the necessity for fire departments in that they cannot be organized and trained after the fire breaks out.”

~Rear Adm. Clifford Swanson  
Surgeon General, 1948

## ⚓ DISEASE CONTROL SHIPS ⚓

- In 1950, the Navy established **Fleet Epidemic Disease Control Units (FEDCUs)** aboard the landing craft **USS LSI(L)-1091 (No. 1)** and the auxiliary ship **USS Whidbey Island (AG-141) (No. 2)**.
- Soon after it was acquired from the Army in 1947, Whidbey Island operated as the Navy's **chief "floating laboratory"** in the Pacific.
- Medical personnel stationed aboard this laboratory travelled extensively throughout the Trust Territories in the Pacific, and Formosa (Taiwan) conducting health surveys.
- In the Korean War, both Whidbey Island and LSI(L)-1091 **provided essential epidemiological services** and oversaw the study and treatment of malaria, enteric and venereal diseases.



## ⚓ NEPMUs / FDPMUs ⚓

- In 1952, ECDUs were redesignated **Preventive Medicine Units** and in 1971, they were renamed **Navy Environmental Preventive Medicine Units (NEPMUs)**.
- Today, the Navy operates four of these units in **Norfolk (No. 2)**, **San Diego (No. 5)**, and **Pearl Harbor (No. 6)** and **Rota, Spain (No. 7)**, under the administrative control of the Navy and Marine Corps Force Health Protection Command (NMCFHPC) in Norfolk, Va.
- In 2001, the Navy launched the expeditionary **Forward Deployable Preventive Medicine Unit (FDPMU)** to "identify, evaluate, and monitor diseases, injuries and hazards in environments that threaten the health of deployed U.S. Forces."