

Scientists to explore meltwater at Greenland Cold War camp

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Scientists will travel to Greenland to monitor levels of melting ice around a Cold War-era US military base

Scientists in Denmark plan an expedition to Greenland's remote northwest to measure how fast ice is melting around a Cold War-era US military base, which risks leaking toxic waste into the environment.

Resembling something from a James Bond film, US army engineers

began the futuristic "Camp Century" in 1959—officially as a research laboratory but also intended as a secret nuclear missile facility.

Scientists now fear rising temperatures could see [toxic waste](#) leak from the snow-covered base.

"We need to find out how much (ice) melt is occurring and measure ice temperatures now to have a good basis to go forward," William Colgan, research climatologist and project manager at the Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland (GEUS), told AFP on Tuesday.

"We're going to be there for three weeks and do a lot of complicated things... the logistics are daunting."

An expedition team of six climate researchers will set up near the camp to measure ice temperatures down to at least 55 metres (180 feet) below the surface between July 12 and August 9.

Due to unsteady ice conditions and temperatures plumbing minus 15 degrees Celsius (5 degrees Fahrenheit), the team will rely on a skiplane "to fly-in every nut and bolt needed to establish camp," GEUS said in a statement.

At Camp Century, a network of tunnels under the snow contained everything from research facilities to a hospital, a cinema and a church—all powered by a small, portable [nuclear reactor](#).

The pollutants left behind include PCBs used in building supplies, tanks of raw sewage and low-level radioactive coolant used in the nuclear reactor.

Code-named "Project Iceworm", the camp accommodated up to 200 soldiers and even included a test railway under the snow, which was

never fully realised.

Last month, Norway said it was boosting protection of a seed storage vault designed to protect the world's crops from disaster, after soaring temperatures caused water to leak into its entrance.

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