



# Environmental Bulletin

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*from the Savannah River Site*

## **R-Area Bingham Pump Outage Pits & R-Area Unknown Pits**

### **Proposed Plan Recommends Institutional Controls**

US DOE, US EPA, and SCDHEC have reviewed the risks associated with the R-Area Bingham Pump Outage Pits (R BPOP) operable unit (OU) at the Savannah River Site (SRS) and are recommending that Institutional Controls be established that consist of site maintenance and access controls. Site maintenance will consist of inspections of the OU and maintenance of drainage features to minimize the formation of large gullies. Minor earthwork will be performed as needed to repair any erosion damage that may occur. Site maintenance will also include mowing. Access controls will include security measures such as posting and maintenance of warning signs.

The R BPOPs OU is comprised of three known pits (643-8G, 643-9G, and 643-10G) and three other areas of disturbance located among the R BPOPs referred to as R-Area Unknowns, or "RUNKs". Due to the RUNKs proximity to the R BPOPs, the three suspected pits (RUNK-1, RUNK-2, and RUNK-3) are also included in the OU.

Major modifications were made to R-Area primary and secondary reactor cooling systems during 1957 and 1958. The outage of the cooling water systems that occurred as a consequence of these modifications became known as the R-Area Bingham Pump Outage. Waste generated during the R-Area outage was segregated into two groups based on the level of radioactivity. Debris having radioactive contamination higher than 25 milliRoentgen per hour (mR/hr) was removed from the reactor area and disposed of in the SRS Burial Ground Complex in E-Area. Debris having low levels of radioactivity (less than 25 mR/hr) was buried in the R BPOPs (643-8G, 643-9G, and 643-10G). The R BPOPs were closed in the late 1950s by backfilling with approximately 1.2 m (4 ft) of cover soil. Construction debris disposed in the R BPOPs consists of miscellaneous construction materials such as pipes, cables, ladders, concrete, and miscellaneous construction hardware.

RUNK-2 dates from the construction of the R-Area Reactor. Construction debris has been verified to exist in RUNK-2 based on magnetic and ground penetrating radar (GPR) sur-

veys and soil sampling in the pit. GPR survey of RUNK-1 and RUNK-3 indicated no metallic debris. Due to the lack of any identified debris, it is possible that no debris was ever placed in these two RUNKs.

The public comment period is scheduled for April 18, 2002 to May 17, 2002. Comments on the Proposed Plan are requested by June 1, 2002. Upon completion of the public comment period, a Responsiveness Summary will be prepared which addresses public comments. The Responsiveness Summary will be made available with the Record of Decision, and will be sent to each person who submits comments.

Copies of the Proposed Plan are available in the administrative record, which also contains the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) report for these units. The administrative record is available in the information repositories listed below:

- US DOE Public Reading Room at the Gregg-Graniteville Library at the University of South Carolina-Aiken campus in Aiken, SC; and
- Thomas Cooper Library Government Documents Department at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC.

Hard copies of the Proposed Plan are available at the following:

- Reese Library at Augusta State University in Augusta, GA; and
- Asa H. Gordon Library at Savannah State University in Savannah, GA.

#### **Need More Information?**

If there is interest in discussing this recommended remedial approach, a public hearing may be requested. Comments on the Proposed Plan modification should be sent to SCDHEC, Attn: John Litton, P.E., Director, Division of Hazardous and Infectious Waste Management, Bureau of Land and Waste Management, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201, (803) 896-4000.

Comments on the Proposed Plan and requests for public meetings may be sent to Jim Moore, Westinghouse Savannah River Co., Savannah River Site, Building 742-A, Aiken, SC 29808, 1-800-249-8155, email: jim02.moore@srs.gov

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