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Newspaper Report of Upcoming 2/25/88 Public Meeting to Discuss the WSSRAP RI/FS (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 2/24/88

# U.S. Testing Of Water Near Cleanup Is Urged

By Theresa Tighe
Of the St. Charles Post

The federal government should pay to test the safety of drinking water from county wells in the cleanup of radioactive waste from a quarry near the wells, says an environmentalist from St. Charles County.

Dr. Michael V. Garvey, president of a citizens group monitoring the cleanup, says the federal government should also pick up the tab for relocating the county well field if the cleanup threatens the water supply.

"The Department of Energy should fund state and local governments for increased costs of a monitoring program," Garvey said.

Thousands of county residents get their drinking water from wells in the flood plain of the Missouri River. The wells are less than a half mile from a limestone quarry that was used as a dump for radioactive waste from an old uranium processing plant nearby.

The quarry has been leaking. Garvey and other members of his group, St. Charles Countians Against Hazardous Waste, fear that the $357 million cleanup could speed the movement of radioactive waste from the quarry to the wells.

Garvey said he would ask state, county and federal officials at a meeting Thursday night to increase their testing of county wells for chemical and radiological contamination during the cleanup.

The meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. in the Francis Howell High School gymnasium off Missouri Highway 94 south of its intersection with Interstate 40-61. The meeting will be cosponsored by the U.S. Energy Department and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Energy Department is conducting the cleanup because its predecessor, the Atomic Energy Commission, operated the uranium plant and dumped the waste into the quarry. The quarry and the plant are off Highway 94. The quarry is on the Environmental Protection Agency's national priority list for Superfund cleanups.

The Energy Department, the Missouri Departments of Health and Natural Resources, the county and Garvey's group routinely test water in the well field for contamination.

The county has budgeted more than $161,000 for testing in the county well field this year. Ron Burgess, an environmental engineer with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, said his agency does not budget specifically for the county well field and he could not estimate the cost of testing in the well field.

A spokeswoman for the Missouri Department of Health was unable to provide an estimate of the cost of her department's testing.

# Agencies Seek Public Views On Uranium Plant Projects

By Theresa Tighe
Of the St. Charles Post

St. Charles County residents are invited to comment at a public meeting Thursday night on the federal cleanup of an old uranium processing plant.

The meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. in the Francis Howell High School gymnasium on Highway 94 South of Highway 40-61. The plant is on Highway 94 half a mile west of the high school.

The U.S Energy Department and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are sponsoring the meeting.

The chief topic will be a request by the Energy Department that the Evirnomental Protection Agency evaluate cleanup methods and their effects on the environment.

The evaluation would be in a document called the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study. The document would include the information usually included in an environmental impact study, officials said.

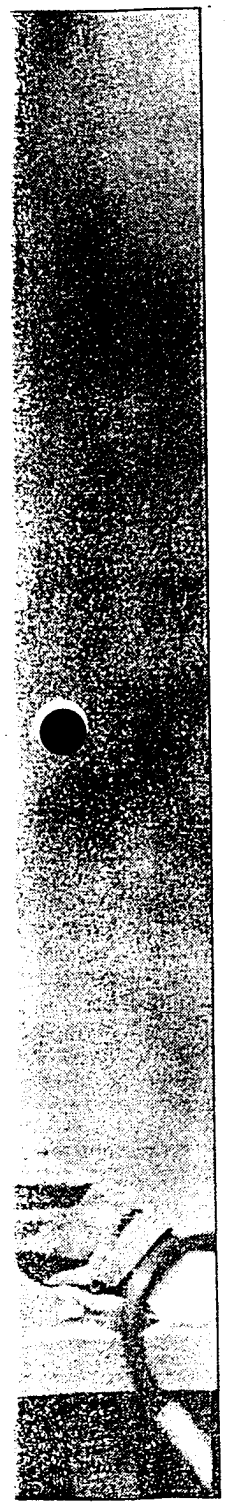
Officials are also expected to make public details on some cleanup projects, such as the removal of asbestos and plans to build a dike to keep contaminated water on the plant grounds.

In a heavy rain, storm water containing uranium runs off the plant site into the August A. Busch Memorial Wildlife Area. The Energy Department is conducting a $357 million cleanup of the old plant, an old quarry used as a radioactive dump and related sites along Highway 94. The agency's predecessor, the Atomic Energy Commission, processed uranium and thorium at the site from 1957 to 1966.

The Energy Department usually issues studies of cleanup methods and effects on the environment in environmental impact studies.

The Environmental Protection Agency uses remedial investigation-/feasibility studies to evaluate cleanup methods and effects on the environment when it oversees a decontamination.

Environmentalists haye said they fear that the Environmental Protection Agency's process might not be as rigorous as the Energy Department's. Officials of both federal agencies say these fears are unfounded because all of the provisions of both processes will be met.



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