

**DOE-FMPC RESPONSES TO CITIZENS'
COMMENTS/QUESTIONS**

05/11/89

DOE-FMPC/CITIZENS

2



202

Department of Energy

FMPC Site Office
P.O. Box 398705
Cincinnati, Ohio 45239-8705
(513) 738-6319

G-000-1001.61

May 11, 1989

Tom Storm


Dear Mr. Storm:

Thank you for the time and thought you put into your letter following the January 1989 community meeting to discuss the environmental study underway at the Feed Materials Production Center. Your letter provides the type of information that helps us to be more responsive to our neighbors, the residents near the FMPC.

I have passed your letter on to our community relations support group to consider how your suggestions might improve our interactions with the community. We plan to implement one of your suggestions -- to identify speakers more clearly at community meetings. We are adding name cards to identify technical presenters and panel members who will be on hand for the spring community meeting. The meeting is set for 6:30 p.m. May 15 in the Ross Middle School.

In the meantime, I'd like to comment briefly on the suggestions in your letter.

1. Health Studies at the FMPC

Clearly, health effects of FMPC wastes are a major concern of our neighbors. DOE shares the concern that no adverse health effects should result from any of our activities here or elsewhere around the country.

Conducting valid health studies is extraordinarily difficult; however, because of many factors, including those you laid out: individual and family health history, proximity to the source, length of exposure, exposure to health risks from other sources (including primary and secondary tobacco smoke, ultra-violet rays, and pesticides, to name a few), and personal susceptibility to such risks. Human patterns of health and exposure are almost as unique as our fingerprints, and it takes a study of a very large population -- one portion potentially exposed and the other not -- to develop valid results. Other factors that hinder the success of such studies are the long period of time over which certain effects evolve, the privacy of individual medical records, and the difficulty in locating people once they have moved away.

The net result is that such factors often mask any incremental public health effects potentially caused by a specific type of exposure to radioactive or hazardous materials. Rather than blindly proceeding with an epidemiological study in the Fernald area, the National Centers for Disease Control (CDC) are attempting to utilize existing information and the results of other on-going studies to determine whether the level of potential effects associated with FMPC operations, if they exist, could be ascertained in spite of the complicating factors. If CDC determines with some level of assurance that scientifically credible results will be gained, we expect that such a comprehensive public health study will be conducted by CDC.

We believe that an "informal" survey as you suggest might increase false expectations about what could actually be produced from such a study. Instead, we feel we must establish the extent to which radioactive or hazardous materials may have been released into the environment.

The Remedial Investigation underway at the FMPC is seeking to do that. Once we have established the bounds of the problem, we will turn the information over to our contracted specialists. They will study not only exposure rates and risks at the FMPC, but the effects that customary FMPC activities may have on exposure.

2. Enlisting support of local officials and medical professionals to tell the "Fernald story."

We appreciate both of these suggestions. We will have our community relations support group explore them.

3. Placement of articles in the newspaper.

This is also a good suggestion that I will ask our community relations support group to follow up on. Watch local newspapers for announcements about the May 15 spring community meeting.

4. The siren cannot be heard.

I have turned this comment over to our emergency response support group.

5. Response to comments; protect the physical environment.

I hope you will see this letter as one of many good-faith efforts to be responsive to our neighbors. We hope to continue to improve in this area.

You have my strong commitment to protecting public health and to cleaning up and protecting the environment. Please continue to ask questions and share your comments and observations. Thank you.

Sincerely,


James A. Reafsnyder
Site Manger

DP-84: