



*Many Voices Working for the Community*

# Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

---

May 9, 2001

Mr. Rod Nelson  
Assistant Manager for Environmental Management  
DOE-Oak Ridge Operations  
P.O. Box 2001, EM-90  
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

Dear Mr. Nelson:

## **Recommendation Concerning Public Information on the U.S. Department of Energy Toxic Substances Control Act Incinerator**

In the course of recent discussions on the Toxic Substances Control Act Incinerator (TSCAI), the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) required background material to provide newer members the information they needed to participate in an informed dialogue. What we discovered was that the available information on TSCAI was outdated, incomplete, and not easily accessible to stakeholders.

As such, ORSSAB is recommending that DOE improve the scope and format of the public information on TSCAI to make it more current and understandable to stakeholders without a technical background. It is recommended that DOE develop the following materials:

### **Improved and Updated Fact Sheet**

The current TSCAI fact sheet from November 1999 entitled "Treating Toxic Waste with the TSCA Incinerator" is now out of date. While it provides somewhat of a detailed process narrative, the lack of figures and diagrams make it difficult to follow. It also does not contain any information regarding the Governor's Panel and how community issues and concerns are being addressed. A new fact sheet is needed that provides an easy-to-understand overview of TSCAI and examines the many key issues that are currently being addressed.

### **Current Update to the Governor's Panel**

The most recent update on the status of recommendations from the Governor's Panel is dated June 1999. The organization of the update is generally effective, outlining each of the recommendations and

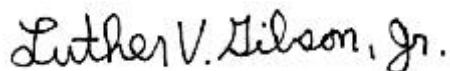
providing a current status. However, most of the status comments refer to future events whose dates have long since passed. Also needed is a brief overview of the purpose, goals, and history of the Governor's Panel.

### **Information on Current Activities at TSCAI**

There is a need to convey that technical issues are currently being addressed at TSCAI. There is a great deal of work ongoing with trial burns and risk assessments and no ready source of public information. The public needs to clearly understand what is happening, why it is being done, what the results mean, and what will happen next. Other examples of information that would be useful to the public include comparative performance of similar waste treatment facilities and advances in emissions monitoring technology. More information on these and related issues should be disseminated to interested stakeholders. That TSCAI had completed tests and evaluations and has continuous emission monitors and samplers is true but somewhat misleading in that there are some parameters monitored continuously, some pollutants sampled and analyzed off-line in a laboratory, and some only measured during trial burns and other regulatory tests. This needs to be more clearly explained. The opportunity to provide input to the radiological and non-radiological on-site risk assessments plans needs to be publicized. A web site should be created with more current information on the TSCAI incinerator, with the opportunity for stakeholders to submit questions or material for posting.

ORSSAB would like to play a role in reviewing draft materials and providing guidance to DOE in developing final materials for public use. DOE should also consider soliciting feedback from representative stakeholders on the understandability of information related to TSCAI and to anticipate additional issues that may be raised from elevation of information to a public awareness level.

Sincerely,



Luther V. Gibson, Chair

cc: Pat Halsey, DOE-ORO  
Susan Gawarecki, LOC  
Connie Jones, EPA Region 4  
John Owsley, TDEC  
Joy Sager, DOE-ORO