Department of Energy

Oak Ridge Operations Office
P.O. Box 2001
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831—

October 9, 1996

Dear Stakeholder:

We appreciate your prior involvement concerning the Department of Energy's (DOE's) activities to privatize treatment and disposal of low-level mixed waste. As you are aware, a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was developed in February 1996 to address private sector treatment and disposal of all stored and currently-generated low-level mixed waste on the Oak Ridge Reservation.

We obtained many comments from the public. A recurring concern of stakeholders was that the EA analysis was based on hypothetical facilities sized to treat more waste than the currently-identified Oak Ridge inventory. This approach was intended to provide a bounding analysis of potential, cumulative impacts. Many stakeholders indicated a more waste-specific approach would be preferable. Numerous stakeholders were also concerned that the analysis was based on limited waste characterization and treatment technology data.

We are, therefore, withdrawing this programmatic EA and completing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review as potential treatment and disposal options are identified for specific waste streams. For example, we are proposing a waste stream-specific EA to address the treatment and disposal of the mixed waste sludges from the West End Treatment Facility at the Y-12 Plant and the Central Neutralization Facility at the K-25 Site. This EA will specifically address the sludges that require stabilization to meet land disposal restrictions.

Your comments on the low-level mixed waste EA have assisted DOE in the decision-making process. As planning for low-level mixed waste treatment and disposal progresses, we will continue to keep you informed. Should you have any questions about the DOE strategy for low-level mixed waste, please contact either Rick Korynta at (423) 576-9664 or Joy Sager at (423) 576-0850.

Sincerely,

Suzanne P. Riddle, Acting Director
Waste Management and Technology
Development Division