



## Department of Energy

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**OCT 16 2008**

Ms. Bobby Lee  
Citizens Advisory Board  
111 Memorial Drive  
Paducah, KY 42001

PPPO-02-656-08

Dear Ms. Lee:

### **RESPONSE TO CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATION 08-04 (PATH TO INCREASE LOCAL PUBLIC COMMUNICATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY)**

U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is in receipt of Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Consensus Recommendation 08-04 that suggests paths to increased public communication with local stakeholders. The CAB recommended DOE incorporate the following into its public communication plan:

- 1) Determine when (A) public education is appropriate vs. (B) public information gathering activities and clearly inform the community of the intent (A or B) prior to each public meeting. Public education is perceived as DOE presenting its decisions to the community in primarily a one-way communication path. Structuring an information gathering meeting would emphasize a two-way communication feedback system, with direct solicitation of stakeholder knowledge and opinions as the primary objective. DOE would be clear that it desires and needs public input to best manage environmental clean-up within the local community.
- 2) DOE should expand its use of communication tools to disperse their information and fact sheets. Specifically,
  - a. Preparing and distributing press releases to all regional media outlets prior to public meetings to demonstrate the DOE objective of including diverse stakeholders. A list of suggested media outlets is attached.
  - b. Establishing an identity in the community through continuous monthly or bimonthly presence with local media outlets including on the public radio station, WKMS.
  - c. Producing non-technical print, video and Internet material for public consumption to communicate its mission, strategy and successes to the public as needed or at a minimum of once per year.

- d. Scheduling DOE presentations to community organizations at least once each quarter to educate the public and for information gathering purposes from the community.
- e. Sponsoring a yearly event with other organizations in the community to establish support of local development.
- f. Coordinating a Media Day Event for print media, radio, television and internet news people in order to explain the basic terminology, the CERCLA process, and critical issues and major benefits surrounding the PGDP cleanup effort.

In response to CAB recommendation #1, DOE believes that its presentation of cleanup strategies to the public is only one aspect of the public education process and should not be perceived as a one-way communication path. DOE believes that the information it presents to the public enables the public to provide knowledgeable stakeholder input back to DOE. DOE will consider the purpose of each public meeting and the stage of decision making in striking a balance between educating the public on issues and soliciting public comments.

In response to CAB recommendation # 2, DOE is supportive of expanding the use of communication tools to disperse information. DOE plans to prepare and distribute press releases to regional media outlets prior to public meetings, and also plans to schedule routine air time on the local National Public Radio station. Additionally, DOE will attempt to coordinate with a local media outlet prior to public meetings to allow the press an opportunity to generate related informational stories that may help prepare stakeholders for the upcoming meeting.

CAB meetings will remain an outlet to routinely disseminate general project information to the public. The Deputy Designated Federal Official's (DDFO) presentations and working sessions are designed to provide CAB members and the public with the most up-to-date project status. DOE remains open to ideas that will assist us in communicating our mission, scope, and site accomplishments to the general public. DOE also plans to develop non-technical publications that will assist the layperson in understanding the status of cleanup projects at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant (PGDP).

Further, DOE will continue to provide the opportunity for various community organizations to request DOE speakers to discuss activities at the site. In the past, these opportunities have included DDFO presentations, the recent Chamber of Commerce presentation, the nickel expression of interest meeting, and the use of site tours for interested parties. DOE will consider the suggestion to sponsor a yearly event with other organizations in the community to establish support of local development. DOE requests that the CAB provide a more specific recommendation on their vision of such an event.

We thank you for your input and for your continued support as we continue our efforts to increase local public communication during the remediation of PGDP.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Rob Seifert at (270) 441-6823.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Knerr', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Reinhard Knerr  
Paducah Site Lead  
Portsmouth/Paducah Project Office

cc:

DMC/Kevil  
EIC/PAD

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