



# Environmental Bulletin

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*from the Savannah River Site*

## Interim Action Proposed Plan for A-Area Burning Rubble Pits (731-A, -1A) and Rubble Pit (731-2A) Operable Unit Available

The Department of Energy (DOE) will release an Interim Action Proposed Plan on December 21, 1999 describing the proposed interim remedial action for the A-Area Burning/Rubble Pits (731-A, -1A) and Rubble Pit (731-2A) (ABRP) Operable Unit at the Savannah River Site (SRS). The plan will be available for public review and copying at the locations listed in this article. The public comment period is scheduled for December 21, 1999 to January 19, 2000. This document was completed to meet the terms of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), a law governing the investigation and cleanup of waste units. DOE has worked with the United States Environmental Protection Agency- Region IV (EPA) and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) to ensure the remedial approach is consistent with all applicable environmental requirements.

DOE, EPA and SCDHEC have reviewed the risks associated with the unit and are recommending the following interim actions for the ABRP:

**1) Soil Remediation** - The preferred final alternative for soil remediation is the installation of a minimum one-foot thick soil cover over Pit 731-2A. This is a cost-effective alternative that will eliminate risk to the current workers during groundwater remediation. In addition, this action would be sufficient for use as the final remedy for the source term.

**2) Groundwater Remediation** - The preferred interim alternative for groundwater remediation consists of two stages. In the first stage, ten active air sparging wells will be used to strip volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from the groundwater and a passive soil vapor extraction (SVE) system (e.g., BaroBalls™ wells) will be used to remove the VOC vapors from the unsaturated soils above the groundwater to the atmosphere. This stage will be operated for approximately 12 months. During this time, operating data and effectiveness monitoring data will be gathered to determine the suitability of this system for remediating the groundwater plume. Based on the information obtained during the

first stage, the system will be supplemented during the second stage with additional air sparging wells, and the vapor extraction system may be converted to an active SVE system, if necessary. Nutrient injection and carbon adsorption units may also be added to the system during the second stage. The second stage would also be operated for approximately 12 months.

An interim action is proposed because of the uncertainty of the groundwater remediation within the overall unit remediation strategy.

The ABRP is located approximately 1.5 miles south of M-Area and just west of Road D. Between 1951 and 1973, Pits 731-A and 731-1A were used to burn paper, plastics, wood, rubber, rags, cardboard, oil, degreasers, and solvents. Combustible materials were burned monthly. Pit 731-2A was only used as a rubble pit. After burning was discontinued in 1973, Pits 731-A and 731-1A were also converted to rubble pits and used to dispose of concrete rubble, bricks, tile, asphalt, plastic, metal, wood products, and rubber. When the pits were filled to capacity, they were covered with compacted clay-rich native soil and vegetation was established. The actual closing date is not recorded; however, the estimated time is 1978. The Pits Area is defined as Pits 731-A, 731-1A, and 731-2A.

Two other areas within the operable unit were investigated. The first area, designated as the "Potential Pit", has been tentatively identified approximately 500 feet east of the Pits Area. The Potential Pit was identified based on physical evidence along the ground surface and interviews with SRS personnel. The second area, designated as the "Depressional Area" due to its lower elevation, is located approximately 300 feet east of the Potential Pit.

Comments on the Interim Action Proposed Plan are requested by January 19, 2000. Upon completion of the public comment period, a Responsiveness Summary that addresses public comments will be prepared. The Responsiveness

Summary will be made available with the Interim Record of Decision and will be sent to each person who submits comments.

Copies of the Interim Action Proposed Plan are available in the administrative record file, which also contains the RCRA Facility Investigation/Remedial Investigation Report with Baseline Risk Assessment (RFI/RI/BRA) report for this unit. The administrative record file is available in the information repositories listed below:

- DOE Public Reading Room at the Gregg-Graniteville Library at the University of South Carolina-Aiken campus in Aiken, SC; and
- Thomas Cooper Library Government Documents Department at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC.

Hard copies of the Interim Action Proposed Plan are available at the following locations:

- Reese Library at Augusta State University in Augusta, GA; and
- Asa H. Gordon Library at Savannah State University in Savannah, GA.

The Interim Action Proposed Plan is also available on the Internet at the SRS Home Page (<http://www.srs.gov>), under "Happening Now," (<http://www.srs.gov/general/srs-home.html>) and on the SRS Environmental Restoration Home Page under "Public Involvement," (<http://www.srs.gov/general/srenviro/erd/pub/pubinv.html>).

Comments on the Interim Action Proposed Plan may be sent to Mr. Jim Moore.

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