



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUN 13 2014

OFFICE OF
SOLID WASTE AND
EMERGENCY RESPONSE

OSWER 9200.1-126

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Distribution of the “Superfund Radiation Risk Assessment: A Community Toolkit” Document for the General Public

FROM: *for* Robin H. Richardson, Acting Director *Dan Harty*
Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation

TO: Superfund National Policy Managers, Regions 1–10

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to transmit to you a final document entitled: “Superfund Radiation Risk Assessment: A Community Toolkit”.

Role of the Guidance

The Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation (OSRTI) developed this toolkit to present a collection of 22 fact sheets to help the general public understand more about EPA’s risk assessment process used at radioactively contaminated Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) ¹ sites. It also provides brief overviews on EPA’s risk assessment calculators and provides information regarding radionuclides that are commonly found at Superfund sites. This toolkit will be of interest to site decision makers and Community Involvement Coordinators (CICs) at radioactively contaminated sites being addressed by CERCLA.

¹ The toolkit transmitted by this memorandum provides information on risk assessment under CERCLA and is consistent with the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP). It does not alter the NCP’s general expectations for remedial actions, such as those regarding treatment of principal threat waste and the use of containment and institutional controls for low-level threat waste. Consistent with CERCLA and the NCP, remedial actions need to attain or waive Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirements (ARARs); potential ARARs for contaminated ground water at radiation sites typically include Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) or non-zero Maximum Contaminant Level Goals (MCLGs) established under the Safe Drinking Water Act. This document provides information to the general public on how staff for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conduct risk assessments for radioactively contaminated CERCLA sites. The information is designed to be consistent with EPA’s national guidance on these issues. This toolkit does not, however, substitute for EPA’s statutes or regulations, nor is it a regulation itself. Thus, it cannot impose legally binding requirements on EPA, states, or the regulated community, and may not apply to a particular situation based upon the circumstances. EPA may change this toolkit in the future, as appropriate.

Background

The toolkit is part of a continuing effort by OSRTI to provide updated information for addressing radioactively contaminated remedial Superfund sites consistent with our guidance for addressing chemically contaminated sites (while accounting for the technical differences between radionuclides and chemicals). OSRTI intends for this effort to facilitate remedial cleanups that are consistent with the NCP at radioactively contaminated sites and to incorporate new information based on improvements to the Superfund program.

The EPA previously issued the booklet “Common Radionuclides Found at Superfund Sites” (OSWER No. 9200.1-34, July 2002). The booklet provided information to help the general public understand more about the various common radionuclides that are found at Superfund sites across the nation. It also answered common questions regarding exposure to radionuclides and human health. The fact sheets in Attachment B replace this 2002 booklet.

The EPA issued the video “Superfund Radiation Risk Assessment and How You Can Help, an Overview” (March 2005) as an additional resource for the public. The video describes the Superfund risk assessment process for radioactive contamination: what it is, how it works, and how members of the public can be involved. This video was intended to be of interest to the general public, site decision-makers, and community involvement coordinators at radioactively contaminated sites being addressed by CERCLA.

Implementation

For questions related to this community toolkit, you can contact Stuart Walker by email at walker.stuart@epa.gov or by telephone at (703) 603-8748.

Attachment

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