

and recommendations regarding these proposed priorities. All comments submitted in response to this notice will be available for public inspection during and after the comment period, in Room 3E228, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday of each week except Federal holidays.

Program Authority: Sections 9205 and 9209 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 7905 and 7909).

Dated: December 22, 1998.

Gerald N. Tirozzi,

Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education.

[FR Doc. 98-34331 Filed 12-28-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for Closure of High-Level Waste Tanks at the Savannah River Site, Aiken, South Carolina

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) intends to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on the proposed closing of high-level waste tanks at the Savannah River Site (SRS) near Aiken, South Carolina. DOE proposes to close the tanks to protect human health and the environment and to promote safety. DOE's preferred alternative is to remove the residual waste from the tanks to the extent technically and economically feasible, and then to fill them with a reducing grout to bind up residual waste and a structural material to prevent collapse of the tanks. DOE proposes to close these tanks and their associated waste handling equipment in accordance with the Industrial Wastewater Closure Plan for F- and H-Area High-Level Waste Tank Systems, prepared by DOE and approved by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC). In closing the tanks, DOE will comply not only with the Closure Plan, which is required by Industrial Wastewater Permits that SCDHEC issued to DOE, but also with the applicable requirements of DOE Orders, including DOE 5820.2A (Radioactive Waste Management). DOE invites comments on the scope of the EIS.

DATES: The public scoping period begins with the publication of this Notice and concludes February 12, 1998. DOE

invites Federal agencies, Native American tribes, State and local governments, and the public to comment on the scope of this EIS. DOE will consider fully all comments received by the close of the scoping period, and will consider comments received after that date to the extent practicable.

Two public scoping workshops will be held during the scoping period:

January 14, 1999

2:00-4:00 pm and 6:00-8:00 pm,
North Augusta Community Center,
101 Brookside Drive, North
Augusta, South Carolina, and,

January 19, 1999

2:00-4:00 pm and 6:00-8:00 pm,
Holiday Inn Coliseum, 630
Assembly Street, Columbia, South
Carolina.

These scoping workshops will provide information about the high-level waste tank closure process and alternatives for closure of high-level waste tanks at SRS. The workshops will provide opportunities to comment orally or in writing on the EIS scope, including the alternatives and issues that the Department should consider in the EIS.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the scope of the EIS may also be mailed to the address below or sent by fax, voice mail, or electronic mail. Written comments on the scope of this EIS should be sent to: Andrew Grainger, NEPA Compliance Officer, Savannah River Operations Office, U. S. Department of Energy, Building 742A, Room 183, Aiken, South Carolina 29802, Attention: Tank Closure EIS.

Toll-free 24-hour fax and voice mail (local and nationwide): 800-881-7292; E-mail: nepa@srs.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request information about this EIS and the public scoping workshops, or to be placed on the EIS distribution list, use any of the methods listed in **ADDRESSES** above. For general information about the DOE NEPA process, contact: Carol Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance (EH-42), U. S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20585-0119, Phone: 202-586-4600, Voice mail: 800-472-2756, Fax: 202-586-7031.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background and Purpose and Need for Agency Action

At its inception in the 1950s, the primary mission of the SRS was to produce special nuclear materials to support the defense, research, and medical programs of the United States.

This mission largely ended and production of nuclear materials ceased following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Before the cessation of production, however, chemical separation of irradiated fuel at SRS had resulted in product streams (that is, special nuclear materials) and waste streams consisting of acidic liquids bearing radioactive fission products and small amounts of transuranic elements. This waste was chemically converted to an alkaline solution and stored as insoluble sludges, salts, and liquid supernate in 51 large underground tanks constructed between 1952 and 1981 at the SRS F- and H-Area Tank Farms. Two tanks, both in the F-Area Tank Farm, were closed in 1997 and no longer store high-level waste. Approximately 129 million liters (34 million gallons) of high-level radioactive waste are now stored in 49 tanks. SRS still operates facilities to stabilize nuclear materials that were in various stages of processing when strategic nuclear materials production ceased; this activity generates additional small amounts of high-level radioactive waste.

DOE proposes to close the tanks and their associated waste handling equipment to protect human health and the environment and to promote safety, in accordance with (1) the Industrial Wastewater Closure Plan for F- and H-Area High-Level Waste Tank Systems, prepared by DOE and approved by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC), (2) South Carolina Regulation R.61-82, "Proper Closeout of Wastewater Treatment Facilities," and (3) applicable requirements of DOE Orders, including DOE 5820.2A (Radioactive Waste Management).

Removal, treatment, storage, and disposal of bulk waste from the tanks will be in accordance with previous decisions, and are not within the scope of this environmental impact statement. High-level waste will be removed and treated to separate the high-activity fraction from the low-activity fraction. The high-activity fraction will be transferred to the Defense Waste Processing Facility and mixed into borosilicate glass to immobilize the radioactive constituents. Stainless steel canisters containing the borosilicate glass will be stored in Glass Waste Storage Buildings at the SRS pending a decision on disposal in a geologic repository. The low-activity fraction will be transferred to the Saltstone Facility and mixed with grout to make saltstone, a concrete-like material disposed of onsite in concrete vaults. The environmental impacts of these processes and facilities were evaluated

in environmental impact statements for the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DOE/EIS-0082-S, Record of Decision: 60 FR 18589, April 12, 1995), and Savannah River Site Waste Management (DOE/EIS-0217, Record of Decision: 60 FR 552499, October 30, 1995). DOE is currently evaluating processes and facilities required to replace one component of the high-level waste processing system, the In-Tank Precipitation process, and will conduct separate NEPA review of its environmental impacts.

Closure of the high-level tanks after bulk waste removal is the subject of this environmental impact statement. The primary concerns in the closure process are how to deal with the waste that cannot be technically or economically removed from the bottom of a tank and what to do with the tank itself. The potential environmental impacts of tank closure could vary, depending upon how DOE resolves these issues.

Upon completing closure activities for proximate groups of tanks, environmental restoration actions to remediate groundwater would be considered under the SRS Environmental Restoration Program, which is not within the scope of this EIS.

The EIS Schedule

DOE plans to publish the draft EIS in August 1999 and the final EIS in March 2000. A record of decision would be issued no sooner than 30 days from the Environmental Protection Agency's **Federal Register** publication of the notice of availability of the final EIS.

DOE will not close additional high-level waste tanks before completing the EIS process, but will continue to remove waste from the tanks. The EIS schedule will fully support compliance with existing schedules for additional tank closures. DOE is committed under the SRS Federal Facilities Agreement between DOE, EPA, and SCDHEC to close another high-level waste tank by fiscal year 2003 and to complete closure of 24 additional tanks by 2022. Under the Savannah River High Level Waste System Plan, DOE will close the remaining high-level waste tanks by 2028.

Phased Action

Under each alternative except no action, DOE would close 49 high-level waste tanks at SRS by implementing the Industrial Wastewater Closure Plan for F- and H-Area High-Level Waste Tank Systems in accordance with DOE Orders. Associated with each tank is additional waste handling equipment, such as evaporators, pumps, and

transfer lines; a tank and its associated equipment are referred to as a "tank system." Each tank system would be closed in three phases:

- The Evaluation and Cleaning Phase consists of determining closure performance objectives and identifying cleaning and stabilization methods required to meet those performance objectives.
- The Approval Phase consists of DOE obtaining SCDHEC and EPA approval of a DOE tank-systems-specific closure plan module that describes the end state of the tank, the performance modeling results, and closure details. Depending upon the tank-specific performance objectives and the amount and type of waste left in the tank after bulk waste removal, several alternative cleaning methods and stabilization methods could be employed.
- The Stabilization Phase would involve execution of the tank closure in accordance with the approved closure plan module.

Alternatives

Preferred Alternative: DOE's preferred alternative is first to clean the tank, to the extent technically and economically feasible, with spray washing or, if needed to meet performance objectives, oxalic acid cleaning. DOE then would fill the tank with a pumpable material (for example, grout, sand, or saltstone) to immobilize any remaining waste and stabilize the tanks themselves to prevent future collapse.

Clean to Allow Removal of the Tank Alternative: This alternative consists of cleaning the tank only sufficiently to allow safe removal and transferring it to the SRS Radioactive Waste Burial Grounds or a high-level waste repository for disposal. This alternative would eliminate potential migration of contaminants from closed tanks left in place at the SRS tank farms.

No Action Alternative: This alternative consists of bulk waste removal (that is, without further cleaning) and abandonment of the tank. No fill material would be used to immobilize the remaining waste or to stabilize the tank.

Related NEPA Decisions and Reviews

This EIS will use the information and analyses found in several final DOE NEPA reviews that address high-level waste management systems at SRS. These documents are available in these DOE public reading rooms:

DOE Freedom of Information Reading Room, Forrestal Building, Room 1E-190, 1000 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 200585, Phone: 202-586-6020

and

DOE Public Document Room, University of South Carolina, Aiken Campus, University Library, 2nd Floor, 171 University Parkway, Aiken, S.C. 29801, Phone: 803-648-6851

- Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, Defense Waste Processing Facility, DOE/EIS-0082-S, 1994.
- Final Environmental Impact Statement, Savannah River Site Waste Management, DOE/EIS-0217, 1995.
- Environmental Assessment for the Closure of the High-Level Waste Tanks in F- and H-Areas at the Savannah River Site, DOE/EA-1164, 1996.

DOE also will use additional information and analyses, including the Industrial Wastewater Closure Plan for F- and H-Area High-Level Waste Tank Systems, the Closure Modules for Tanks 17 and 20, information from DOE tank closure workshops, and information developed in consultation with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission regarding whether waste left in the high-level waste tanks can be managed as waste incidental to reprocessing plant operations.

Preliminary Identification of EIS Issues

DOE intends to address the following issues when assessing the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives in this EIS. DOE invites comment from Federal agencies, Native American tribes, State and local governments, and the public on these and any other issues that should be addressed in the EIS.

- Potential impacts of the proposed action and alternatives on release of contaminants to groundwater.
- Relationship to land use plans for the SRS.
- Compliance with applicable Federal, State and local requirements and agreements.
- Potential effects on the public, including minority and low-income populations, and SRS workers from exposure to radiological and hazardous materials.
- Potential effects on air, soil, and water quality from normal operations and reasonably foreseeable accidents.
- Potential effects on SRS waste management operations and facilities.
- Pollution prevention, waste minimization, and energy and water use reduction technologies to eliminate or reduce use of energy, water, and hazardous substances and to minimize environmental impacts during closure activities.
- Potential socioeconomic impacts, including potential impacts associated

with the workforce needed for operations during closure activities.

- Potential impacts on cultural and historic resources.
- Potential cumulative environmental impacts of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future operations at the SRS.
- Potential irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on December 22, 1998.

David Michaels,

Assistant Secretary, Environment, Safety and Health.

[FR Doc. 98-34458 Filed 12-28-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) has submitted the proposed information collection request (ICR) described in this notice to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35). The OMB is particularly interested in comments which evaluate: (1) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary to measure the progress and success of the Million Solar Roofs Initiative, (2) the accuracy of DOE's estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection, (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected, and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who choose to respond.

DOE received one public comment in response to an earlier notice inviting public comment on this proposed collection (63 FR 56922, October 23, 1998), and has replied to the comment in its submission to OMB.

DATES: Comments regarding this collection of information should be received on or before January 28, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be sent to the Office of Management and Budget, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: OMB Desk Officer for DOE, Room 10202, New Executive Office Building, 725 17th Street, N.W., Washington DC 20503. A copy of the comments should also be sent to: Kimberly Kendall, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy,

Department of Energy, Room 6C-016, 1000 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20585.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: A copy of the ICR, with applicable supporting documentation, may be obtained from: Kimberly Kendall, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, Room 6C-016, 1000 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20585, (202) 586-0927; or e-mail to kim.kendall@hq.doe.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The following proposed collection of information has been sent to OMB for clearance:

Title: U.S. Department of Energy/ Million Solar Roofs Initiative Registry

OMB Control Number: None.

Type of request: New collection.

Expiration date of current OMB clearance: N/A.

Frequency of response: One time.

Respondents: Individuals, solar energy system installers, other solar energy industry representatives federal agencies, state and local governments, and utilities.

Estimated time per respondent: 30 minutes.

Estimated number of respondents: 1,000.

Total annual burden hours: 500 hours

Total annual cost to federal government: \$20,000.

Summary/description of need: DOE seeks to collect information from individual homeowners, solar energy system installers, other solar energy industry representatives, utilities, federal agencies, and state and local governments concerning the details of newly installed solar energy systems (eg. system size and technology). The collection of this data is critical to the management of the President's Million Solar Roofs Initiative. Because the Initiative seeks to install one million solar energy systems on American homes and businesses by 2010, the information collected will allow DOE to measure its success in this effort. Many thousands of commitments have been made to date and a mechanism must be in place to account for the activity generated under this Federal initiative.

Issued in Washington, DC on December 23, 1998.

Brian T. Castelli,

Chief of Staff, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy.

[FR Doc. 98-34456 Filed 12-28-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Energy Conservation Program for Consumer Products: Publishing of the Petition for Extension of the 180-Day Period for Revising Manufacturers Representations

AGENCY: Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice grants the "Petitions for Extension," dated October 6, 1998, from the Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association (GAMA) on behalf of Aero Environmental Limited, American Water Heater Company, Bock Water Heaters, Bradford-White Corporation, Controlled Energy Corporation (e.l.m. LeBlanc), DEC International, GSW Water Heating Company Ltd., Heat Transfer Products, Inc., Rheem Water Heater Division, A. O. Smith Water Products Company, State Industries, Inc., Therma-Stor Products Group, Vaughn Manufacturing Company, Vulcano Termo-Domesticos S.A., Water Heater Innovations, and Airexcel, Inc., Crispaire Division. GAMA's Petition asks for an extension of the 180-day period for manufacturers' representations. The Energy Policy and Conservation Act, as amended, (EPCA) permits the Secretary of DOE to extend the period for representations by 180 days if good cause is shown.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Terry Logee, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Mail Station EE-43, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585-0121, Telephone: (202) 586-1689, E-mail: terry.logee@ee.doe.gov or Eugene Margolis, Esq., U.S. Department of Energy, Office of General Counsel, Mail Station GC-72, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585-0121, Telephone: (202) 586-9507.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Energy Conservation Program for Consumer Products (other than automobiles) was established by the EPCA which requires DOE to prescribe standardized test procedures to measure the energy consumption of certain consumer products, including water heaters. The intent of the test procedures is to provide a comparable measure of energy consumption that will assist consumers in making purchasing decisions, and to form the basis of the Federal Trade Commission's