



**RECOMMENDATION 20-01: Portsmouth (PORTS) Environmental Management (EM) Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) Recommendation on Enhanced Communication Efforts Related to Environmental Monitoring Information.**

*Portsmouth EM Site Specific  
Advisory Board*

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**Deputy Designated**

**Federal Official**

Joel Bradburne

**DOE Federal Coordinator**

Greg Simonton

**SUPPORT SERVICES**

EHI CONSULTANTS

PHONE: 740-289-5249

FAX: 740-289-1578

EMAIL: JULIE@PORTS-SSAB.ORG

**Background:** In the spring of 2019, community concerns arose following the distribution of the 2017 Portsmouth Annual Site Environmental Report (ASER) that indicated transuranic contaminants were detected in an air monitor adjacent to Zahn's Corner Middle School. Additional information followed that another transuranic element was discovered in 2018 monitoring, which preceded the Scioto Valley Local School District closing Zahn's Corner Middle School in May 2019.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is sponsoring an independent assessment of the area near the site to determine what, if any, contamination from PORTS exists off-site and to what extent. Since this issue arose, questions and concerns arose about the length of time the information was known until it was reported more than a year later in the ASER.

DOE has explained the effort to compile the monitoring data, develop the report, print the report and distribute the report is extensive and time-consuming. Although that is understandable, there should be a mutual agreement that the public should be informed as quickly as possible on environmental monitoring data once it is known. For that reason, the PORTS SSAB offers the following recommendation.

**Recommendation:**

The PORTS EM SSAB recommends:

DOE provide more timely information on all environmental monitoring data related to the Portsmouth site. The PORTS SSAB understands the time required to formulate and distribute the ASER, however, DOE should explore other methods for communicating the data before the ASER is published.

Many citizens in southern Ohio do not have easy access to online information, so the Board recommends the data - in addition to those online tools - be made available quarterly in the Environmental Information Center at the Ohio State University Endeavor Center. This data should also be available at regional libraries, presented at PORTS SSAB board meetings that are open to the public and at the bi-annual DOE open houses that occur throughout the four-county area.

The board also believes reporting this information in a more timely manner will be beneficial to DOE, regulators and the public. The board appreciates DOE's recent efforts to more thoroughly explain the environmental monitoring program and would like for those efforts to continue. Equally important to distributing the environmental monitoring data is ensuring that the public fully understands what those results mean and their impact on human health and the environment.

We want to thank DOE for its interaction with the PORTS EM SSAB and we look forward to providing valuable information to the Department on this topic and other items of interest as the D&D project progresses.

Thank you.