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# NEWS

## MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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Vol. XX No. 291  
(For immediate release)

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### DNR EXPRESSES DISSATISFACTION WITH DOE'S DIRECTION FOR REMEDIAL ACTION AT ST. LOUIS RADIOACTIVE WASTE SITES

JEFFERSON CITY, MO., APRIL 5, 1993 -- The Missouri Department of Natural Resources announced today that it is dissatisfied with the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) direction for the cleanup of the radioactive waste sites in St. Louis City and County. Radiological contamination (radium, thorium, and uranium) at the sites is the result of nuclear weapons-related uranium processing from 1942 to 1956 at the Mallinckrodt Plant, located two miles north of downtown St. Louis.

David Shorr, director of the Department of Natural Resources, sent a letter today to the U.S. Department of Energy expressing that dissatisfaction. "We do not believe that the Department of Energy's current direction adequately responds to the problem. The current strategies only postpone the problems and place the burden in the hands of future generations," Shorr said.

Contamination is present in surface and subsurface soils at the downtown Mallinckrodt Plant, the St. Louis Airport Site, the Latty Avenue properties, associated vicinity properties, several roads in the area of Hazelwood and Berkeley, and on the banks and in sediment of Coldwater Creek. Radioactively contaminated ground water has been identified at the airport site. Some buildings at the Mallinckrodt Plant also are contaminated.

The total volume of contaminated material is estimated to be 876,000 cubic yards. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has placed the airport site and the Latty Avenue properties on the National Priorities List of contaminated sites. The Department of Energy is the agency responsible for the cleanup and the EPA is the lead oversight agency for the project.

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The Department of Energy, under its Formerly Used Sites Remedial Action Program, is considering strategies including the excavation of accessible soils from the Mallinckrodt site, the Latty Avenue properties, vicinity properties and Coldwater Creek. Excavated soils and waste would then be consolidated and capped on top of the existing contaminated soil at the St. Louis Airport Site.

Under this strategy, contaminated soil would remain in contact with ground water at the airport site. Contaminated soil also would remain in place under certain roads in the Latty Avenue area of the cities of Hazelwood and Berkeley. This area is an active industrial area with constant development and redevelopment, which potentially disturbs the contaminated soil under these roads.

Shorr said he is concerned that the concept of leaving the contaminated soils in contact with the ground water does not provide adequate protection for the environment. "I am concerned that Missouri will be faced with a continuing problem of monitoring the soil and ground water in the area," Shorr said. He added that the Department of Energy should consider a strategy that separates the contaminated soil from the ground water.

Shorr emphasized that the department's dissatisfaction with the strategies at the St. Louis sites does not reflect the department's opinion of DOE's handling of the cleanup at Weldon Spring, a waste site in St. Charles County.

"The Department of Energy has made a sound commitment to a safe and lasting cleanup at Weldon Spring, and both departments have worked to maintain a constructive relationship. But I do not see that same commitment to these sites. The St. Louis sites have been treated as low-budget, low-priority program. We would like to see that same solid commitment to clean up the St. Louis sites as we have seen at Weldon Spring," Shorr added.

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Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP)

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# ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

for the St. Louis Site, Missouri

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U.S. Department of Energy