

THE ADVISOR

A Publication of the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

Summer 1998

Several Rocky Flats Buildings Slated for Cleanup and Demolition

The Department of Energy (DOE) and its contractors have begun decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) projects in several building clusters. These include Buildings 123, 779, 771, 776 and 886.

Building 123 D&D activities began in late 1997. In late April of this year, contractors at Rocky Flats began demolition of Building 123. This 19,000 square foot building, the largest to be demolished so far, was one of the original buildings at the site. It was used in earlier years for medical research, and more recently, as an analytical laboratory and for employee radiological health services and records. This building contained a moderate amount of contamination and was therefore classified as a Type 2 building, as specified in the recently developed Decommissioning Program Plan (DPP). A Type 2 building requires either a Proposed Action Memorandum (PAM) or an Interim Measures/Interim Remedial Action (IM/IRA) decision document as described in the Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement (RFCA). A PAM was written for the building, and D&D activities are now complete. The building demolition was approved by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) on April 22. Demolition began on April 24, 1998.

Because this building did contain some contamination, it will serve as a useful model for the future decontamination and decommissioning of the more highly contaminated buildings yet to be taken down at the site.

Building 779 was used as a plutonium research facility. This building and its support buildings, known as a cluster, are currently undergoing deactivation work. A Decommissioning



Building 123 was demolished in April, 1998.

Operations Plan (DOP) is the regulatory document that was required and prepared for this project. A DOP is used for Type 3 buildings, which contain extensive contamination. Building 779 is the first building at Rocky Flats with extensive contamination to undergo D&D activities. This building cluster is expected to be prepared for demolition by Fiscal Year 1999.

In 1995, a national news program reporting on plutonium vulnerabilities called Building 771 "The Most Dangerous Building in America." That title may not be appropriate for much longer. Building 771 was used for plutonium solution processing. The building is currently being deactivated and decommissioning is expected to begin in late FY98. A DOP is

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Rocky Flats Updates



Rocky Flats Cleanup Documents Out for Comment

There are several Rocky Flats cleanup documents currently out for public comment. These include:

- Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement
- Decommissioning Program Plan
- Natural Resources Management Policy
- Building 886 IM/IRA (cleanup plan)

If you are interested in reviewing any of these documents, please call the CAB office at (303) 420-7855 to find out how to get copies.

Soil Action Level Review Project Update

The Rocky Flats Radionuclide Soil Action Levels Oversight Panel continues to work on a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an independent technical contractor to look at the soil cleanup levels developed last year as part of the Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement. Due to public concerns that these levels were set too high, DOE agreed to fund an independent assessment.

The Oversight Panel is comprised of members of the local community, including representatives from local government, academia, and citizen groups who will oversee the assessment. By early June, the Oversight Panel plans to release the RFP and have a contractor chosen and beginning work by the first week in September of this year. The Panel hopes to complete the assessment within one year after work begins. *The Advisor* will continue to provide updates on this important project throughout the coming year.

CAB 1997 Annual Report Now Available

CAB announces the availability of its 1997 Annual Report. This 24-page report provides background information about the Board and Rocky Flats. It also describes the outreach and contract research projects that were implemented during the year. There is a very comprehensive section on CAB recommendations that summarizes each of the 15 recommendations CAB made during 1997, as well as the responses that were received back from the agencies. The Board's 1998 work plan and 1997 financial information are also highlighted.

If you have not already received a copy in the mail, and would like to request that a copy be sent to you, please call the CAB office at (303) 420-7855. Also, the report will soon be available on CAB's web page at www.rfcab.org.

Spotlight on CAB's Agency Representatives

In the last issue of *The Advisor*, we introduced you to CAB's ex-officio representative from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Today we would like to introduce Tim Rehder from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Rehder has represented EPA as an ex-officio member on the Board since November 1995. A native of Colorado, Tim earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Geology from Western State of Colorado, and a Master of Science degree in Geology from Southern Methodist University in Dallas. He began working for the EPA in 1987.

Tim's first assignment at EPA was managing the cleanup of the Denver Radium Site. This project involved the excavation of radium contaminated soil and debris from 41 properties scattered along the Platte River Valley. In total, 350,000 tons of radiologically tainted material was dug up and shipped to Envirocare of Utah for disposal. In 1992, he accepted an assignment in Heidelberg, Germany, assisting the U.S. Army-Europe in the management of its hazardous waste program. These duties focused on helping Army bases in Germany, Italy,

the Netherlands and Belgium with the safe, cost-effective treatment and disposal of the hazardous wastes they generated.

Upon returning to the United States in 1994, Tim was immediately put to work managing the cleanup of RAMP Industries, Inc., another radioactively contaminated site. This was a radioactive waste broker that accepted relatively small quantities of low-level waste from hospitals and university research programs and arranged for its ultimate disposal. Unfortunately, the RAMP manager accepted much more than he actually disposed of. When EPA was called in, more than 5,000 rusty, leaking barrels were stacked four and five high on a two-acre site located in north Denver, less than 50 yards from a large apartment complex. During the period that Tim managed the project, more than 4,000 drums were safely removed from the site and sent to licensed facilities for disposal.

In his current assignment, Tim leads a team of four EPA scientists and engineers - Gary Kleeman, Bill Fraser, Jean Lillich and Mark Aguilar - working exclusively on Rocky Flats issues. If you have any questions regarding EPA's involvement at Rocky Flats, call Tim at (303) 312-6293.

Are You Interested in Joining the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board?

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board (RFCAB) is currently soliciting applications from the community to fill several vacancies. RFCAB is an all volunteer citizens board, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). Our mission is to provide community-based, consensus recommendations to DOE, regulating agencies and other entities regarding the path forward for cleanup of Rocky Flats.

As you can see from the stories in this newsletter, right now is a very exciting time to become involved in Rocky Flats issues. Cleanup, decontamination and decommissioning, and shipment of radioactive materials are in full swing. Important issues are being discussed every day. Cleanup also brings with it more possibilities for accidents and safety problems, so public participation is as important as ever.

Applications will be judged by existing Board members according to current representational needs, as well as the demonstration of commitment and availability to participate.

If you have less time to devote to Rocky Flats issues, but still would like to get involved, you might consider joining one of CAB's Focus Groups. These groups, comprised of CAB members and others interested in cleanup, meet once a month to study issues and develop recommendations.

Current CAB Focus Groups are:

- Plutonium Issues
- D&D / Closure Plan
- Site Wide Issues / Budget
- Health Issues

Meeting dates for each Focus Group are listed on the back cover of this newsletter. If you are interested in finding out more about Focus Groups, please contact the CAB office.



Board members discuss Rocky Flats cleanup issues at a recent monthly meeting.

If you would like to receive a CAB Membership Application packet, please call the CAB office at (303) 420-7855 or fill out the following form and send it to RFCAB, 9035 Wadsworth Parkway, Suite 2250, Westminster, CO 80021. Or you may also fax it to (303) 420-7579.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Fax number (if you want materials faxed to you) _____

Looking for More Information? Want to Share Your Opinions? Here's How.....



Web Site or Email

www.rfcab.org
or
rfcab@indra.com

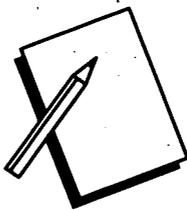
Our website contains Board recommendations, meeting minutes, newsletter articles, Rocky Flats information and more. You may also send us email.



Public Comment Message Line

(303) 637-4808

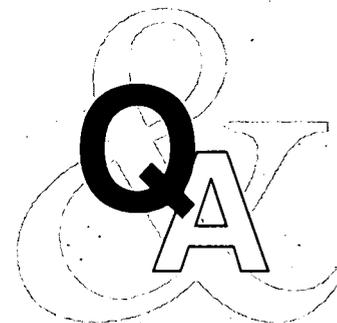
Call 24 hours a day to record your opinions, comments, or suggestions on Rocky Flats or CAB activities. All comments will be reviewed by the Board.



Letters to the Editor / Q&A

RFCAB
Newsletter Editor
9035 Wadsworth Pkwy,
Suite 2250
Westminster, CO 80021

Send us a letter expressing your opinion or asking a question on a Rocky Flats issue and we will print as many as possible in each issue.



We would like to answer your questions about Rocky Flats. If anything you read in this issue brought up questions for you, or you have been wondering about anything related to Rocky Flats, just ask us to find an answer for you. Please send, call in, fax or email your questions to us by July 13 and we will try to answer them in our next issue.

Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

9035 Wadsworth Parkway
Suite 2250
Westminster, CO 80021

(303) 420-7855
fax (303) 420-7579

email rfcab@indra.com

D&D Update (continued from page 1)

being developed on schedule. So far, about 88 gloveboxes (out of 198) have been removed, and all 290 of the process liquid tanks have been drained. The 771 closure team hopes to utilize robotics in this building for waste minimization activities, thereby reducing risk to workers, speeding up the process, and making the process more cost-effective.

The Building 776 cluster is in the early stages of D&D planning. Plutonium metals and oxides were processed in this building. Because of

extensive plutonium contamination (Type 3), a DOP is required for this building cluster. The DOP is expected to be submitted to DOE by October 1998.

Another project that DOE would like to begin during the current fiscal year is D&D in Building 886. Although it is not currently funded, DOE is attempting to secure funding to begin this project. Unlike the previous three building clusters, this cluster contains only moderate radioactive contamination (Type 2). Therefore, in order to satisfy regulatory

requirements, the project would require preparation of an IM/IRA instead of a DOP.

CAB's D&D Focus Group monitors the progress of each of these projects. It has also arranged tours of some of the buildings to see the D&D work first hand. Anyone interested in D&D is encouraged to come to the Focus Group meetings, which are on the third Monday evening of each month. Please call the CAB office at (303) 420-7855 for more information.

Cleaning Up the Environment at Rocky Flats

Update on 1998 Projects

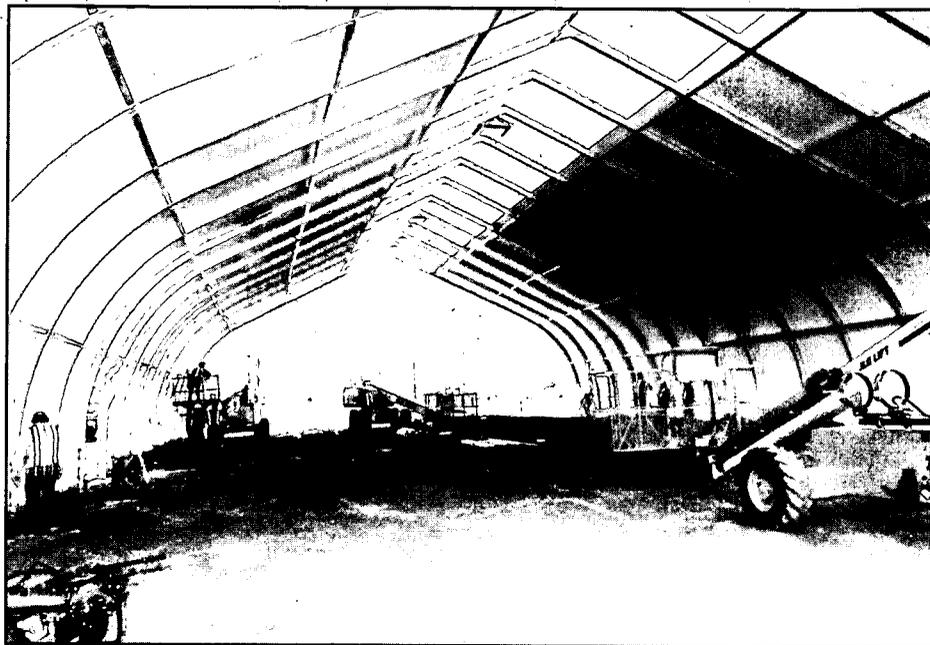
Current environmental remediation projects at Rocky Flats involve going back to areas at the site that were contaminated through past activities and removing the source material as well as treating contaminated groundwater. The projects currently under way, or soon to be started, include the T1 trench excavation, the Operable Unit 2 (OU2) plume remediation (previously known as the Mound plume), and the 903 Pad remediation project.

Excavation is currently in progress at the T1 trench. This trench was used beginning in 1954 as a burial ground for waste drums containing depleted uranium (DU) and coolant oils.

Approximately 125 drums were buried in this trench before 1962. The trench is rated fifth on the Individual Hazardous Substance Site (IHSS) prioritization list. Characterization for this site has been completed, and contingency procedures for unexpected situations have been developed.

Anyone able to see the site from a distance may have noted the addition of a large white structure on the east side of the site, which is a tent that has been constructed over T1. The project planners decided to add this structure as a weather shelter so that work could proceed even when weather conditions are less than ideal. The excavated drums and surrounding soils will be characterized and disposed of according to regulatory guidelines. This remediation project is expected to be completed by the end of this fiscal year.

The OU2 groundwater plume remediation project is also scheduled to begin this year. The OU2 plume contains chlorinated compounds, americium, and uranium contamination in excess of Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement (RFCA) action levels for



A tent has been constructed over the T1 trench. Its primary purpose is to serve as a weather shelter for the remediation activities.

cleanup. This area is also in the top ten of the IHSS priorities. The remediation project proposes to place an impermeable barrier about 17 feet into the soil to act as a funnel system to collect groundwater moving toward Walnut Creek. The funnel will guide the water into a passive reactive metals treatment system. After treatment, the water is monitored for residual contamination. If none is found, the water will be released into Walnut Creek.

The 903 Pad remediation project may not be completed in 2003 as previously scheduled. The 903 Pad was a staging area for waste drums. These drums contained oils used for pit manufacturing which were contaminated with plutonium, uranium, and americium. The barrels were stored in the open environment from the late 1950s until the mid 1960s. The waste drums were removed in the 1960s after several of the barrels corroded and leaked

the contaminated oils into the soil. In 1969, this area was covered with an asphalt cap to keep the contamination from spreading any further than it already had. The 903 Pad has been extensively characterized and recharacterized by the project work force. The characterization work is a slow process due to concerns about worker exposure. The Department of Energy, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and the Environmental Protection Agency are currently in the process of informal discussions about delaying the start of this project by two years. The project is currently scheduled to begin in Fiscal Year 1999.

Additional plume remediation projects being investigated and planned in the near term include the Solar Ponds area, and remediation of a plume resulting from an underground carbon-tetrachloride storage tank (IHSS 118.2).

**Site-Specific
Advisory Boards**

A R O U N D

THE DOE WEAPONS COMPLEX

This Issue: Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board is one of several Site-Specific Advisory Boards (SSABs) that have been formed at former nuclear weapons production sites. In each issue of The Advisor, we spotlight the activities of one of these boards.

The Savannah River Site is a DOE facility covering 310 square miles in parts of Aiken, Barnwell and Allendale counties in South Carolina, and bordering the Savannah River. SRS was constructed during the early 1950s to produce basic materials used in nuclear weapons, primarily tritium "heavy wastes" and plutonium-239. Five reactors were built to produce nuclear materials by irradiating target materials with neutrons. Also built were support facilities, including two chemical separation plants, a heavy water extraction plant, a nuclear fuel and target fabrication facility and waste management facilities. Irradiated materials

were moved from the reactors to one of the two chemical separations facilities. In these facilities, known as "canyons," the irradiated fuel and target assemblies were chemically processed to separate useful products from waste. SRS produced about 36 metric tons of plutonium from 1953 to 1988.

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board, formed in 1993, has recently been studying the issues of plutonium stabilization, processing and disposition. Plutonium stabilization now being conducted at SRS could be expanded to include materials such

as surplus plutonium from dismantled weapons and surpluses from other DOE sites, including Rocky Flats. There are two

disposition strategies under consideration. One is to convert some plutonium to a mixed-oxide (MOX) fuel for use in commercial nuclear reactors, and the other is to immobilize the remainder in glass or another material. A decision was reached on a repackaging and storage facility at SRS for handling surplus plutonium until one of the above disposition strategies is implemented. This facility, the Actinide Packaging and Storage Facility (APSF), will be constructed in SRS's F-Area to stabilize,

repackage, and safely store 5,000 containers of plutonium and other special nuclear materials. Construction is expected to be completed in 2001 at a cost of approximately \$200 million.

DOE has decided to transfer about 7.3 metric tons of plutonium metal and oxides from Rocky Flats to SRS. This action is scheduled to occur starting in October 2001, after construction of the new plutonium storage facility. The material would not be shipped to SRS unless DOE decides to locate a plutonium immobilization facility there. The location



The F-Area at DOE's Savannah River Site

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**Savannah River Site
Citizens Advisory Board
(continued from page 6)**

for a plutonium immobilization facility is one subject of the Draft Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement that is expected to be available for public comment by June 1998. A decision on the facility location is expected in early 1999. At SRS, the plutonium and metal oxide would be repackaged if required and then stored pending disposition.

In addition, DOE is considering a proposal to ship plutonium fluoride and sand, slag and crucible residues as well as scrub alloy material to SRS. This proposal would allow SRS to process the materials and place them in a form and concentration suitable for interim storage pending disposition decisions under the Surplus Plutonium EIS. The total quantity of plutonium would be about 1/2 metric ton. The material would be processed through the F-Canyon/FB-Line chemical separations facilities at SRS and the resulting plutonium metal would be packaged and stored to meet DOE's current standard for storing plutonium.

The Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board approved a recommendation at its January meeting that addressed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Rocky Flats plutonium residues and scrub alloy. The focus of the recommendation was those materials that would be sent to SRS for treatment as the preferred alternative. These are the scrub alloy, plutonium fluoride residues, and the sand, slag and crucible residues.

Simply stated, the Board's position was to support the transportation to SRS followed by processing at the site as long as it was the optimum disposition path when considering safety, expediency and cost effectiveness.

If you would like more information about the Savannah River Citizens Advisory Board, you can visit their website at www.srs.gov/general/people/srs-cab/srs-cab.html.

Give Us Your Feedback

We would greatly appreciate any input you could give us on the content and quality of this newsletter.

1. How many issues of The Advisor have you received? (Please circle one)
0-2 2-4 4-6 6-8 8 or more
2. In each issue, which features do you typically read? (Please circle as many as apply)
 - A. Cover story
 - B. Articles about CAB
 - C. Articles about Rocky Flats cleanup issues
 - D. Short updates
 - E. Articles about other advisory boards
 - F. Meeting calendar
3. Do you have any suggestions for improving The Advisor? (stories, features, services, etc.)
4. Is there a particular topic(s) you would like to see covered in a future issue?
5. If you would like to be removed from the mailing list, please let us know.

**Please send or fax back to the CAB office -
9035 Wadsworth Parkway, Suite 2250
Westminster, CO 80021
Phone (303) 420-7855 Fax: (303) 420-7579**

THANK YOU!

The Advisor is published quarterly by the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board (CAB). The Executive Editor is Tom Marshall. Please send your questions, suggestions and ideas to:

Erin Rogers, Managing Editor
Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board
9035 Wadsworth Parkway, Suite 2250
Westminster, CO 80021
Phone: (303) 420-7855 / Fax: (303) 420-7579
Email: rfcab@indra.com

Except as noted, all articles are written by CAB staff: Ken Korkia, Erin Rogers, Deb Thompson and Brady Wilson. To request a change of address or to add or remove your name from the mailing list, contact Deb Thompson at the above address and phone number. Material may be reprinted if credit is given. CAB is funded under a 1998 grant of approximately \$238,000 sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy.

CAB MISSION STATEMENT

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board, a nonpartisan, broadly representative, independent advisory board with concerns related to Rocky Flats activities, is dedicated to providing informed recommendations and advice to the agencies (Department of Energy, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Environmental Protection Agency), government entities and other interested parties on policy and technical issues and decisions related to cleanup, waste management and associated activities. The Board is dedicated to public involvement, awareness and education on Rocky Flats issues.

Rocky Flats Public Meeting Calendar

June

4	<i>Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Meeting</i>	6 - 9:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
8	<i>CAB Site Wide Issues / Budget Focus Group</i>	7 - 8:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
15	<i>CAB D&D / Closure Plan Focus Group</i>	6 - 8 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
16	<i>CAB Plutonium Issues Focus Group</i>	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall

July

2	<i>Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Meeting</i>	6 - 9:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
6	<i>CAB Site Wide Issues / Budget Focus Group</i>	7 - 8:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
20	<i>CAB D&D / Closure Plan Focus Group</i>	6 - 8 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
21	<i>CAB Plutonium Issues Focus Group</i>	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall

August

6	<i>Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Meeting</i>	6 - 9:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
10	<i>CAB Site Wide Issues / Budget Focus Group</i>	7 - 8:30 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
17	<i>CAB D&D / Closure Plan Focus Group</i>	6 - 8 p.m.	Westminster City Hall
18	<i>CAB Plutonium Issues Focus Group</i>	7 - 9 p.m.	Westminster City Hall

ALL MEETINGS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE, PLEASE CALL BEFORE YOU GO -- (303) 420-7855

Westminster City Hall: 4800 West 92nd Avenue, Westminster

Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

9035 Wadsworth Parkway, Suite 2250

Westminster, CO 80021

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