

**Questions and Answers
Guterl Specialty Steel
Public Information Session
February 6, 2001
1 p.m. – 3 p.m.**

Q: Why has it taken 50 years to get this site cleaned up?

A: I can't comment on what happened 50 years ago. I do know that the DOE has been involved and has collected some data over the years. The Corps of Engineers has had a good track record with other sites where we've come in and taken care of what needs to be done in an expeditious and safe manner.

Q: If you take a Geiger counter into the 16 inch bar mill, it will go off like mad. This stuff has been here all along, why hasn't anything been done about it before?

A: We cannot recount what the DOE did between the 40's and 1974 when FUSRAP was initiated. I think you'll agree with me when I say that science has progressed and we now have a better understanding of radiation and its effects. The Corps has a lot of sites in the local area, with Bliss & Laughlin and Ashland 2 as two of them. We have cleaned up both of those sites while maintaining full awareness with the public. We have to be comprehensive in our investigations in order to do a full cleanup.

Q: So the site is contaminated?

A: Yes, it has radioactive contamination.

Q: How much contamination?

A: We've assessed the current levels at the site and I can tell you that the current levels do not pose a risk to human health because the site has restricted access.

Q: How do we know that for a fact?

A: We will go through a methodical investigation of the site. We will do all kinds of sampling, as we unfold each piece of this, to ensure where it is not contaminated. We will address the highest level of risk that's posed to human health and can always do an interim removal action if we determine that there is an immediate threat posed to human health. We can remove the material; we have done that before.

Q: That's fine, but what about the people who worked there in the past?

A: I understand your concern, but I cannot control what happened in the past.

Q: What are you going to do about peoples' health problems?

A: I'm going to have to defer that question to the DOE. A representative will be giving a brief presentation after we are done.

Q: You say that the program started in 1974 and that you got the program in 1997. What happened during all those years?

A: I'm sure that you are aware from the recent USA Today articles that this site does not stand as the only site that ever existed that ever processed any kind of radioactive material for the MED. It is one of many hundred. For those sites that needed investigation, it takes time to gather and understand the information. I can't tell you how the DOE prioritized those sites, but I can tell you today that since 1997, the Corps of Engineers has established a strong track record in taking information and will move ahead.

Q: But for 33 years, nothing was done by anybody?

A: I can't tell you that nothing was done in those 33 years, but I can tell you that there are many hundreds of sites that are in the program, which also adds to the complexity of it.

Q: I was on your website and looking at other sites, like Linde for instance, you listed the radioactive isotopes for the contaminants at the site and their half lives. Can we expect you to do the same for this site?

A: Yes. Our investigation is still ongoing, but when we know, we will put the information on our website and/or make it available through the mailing list. We are now in the process of getting the 1999 ORISE study done for the DOE on the Web. That will tell you specific findings, including levels and depths of contamination at Guterl. If you don't have access to the Web, you can do a FOIA request and when we establish an Administrative Record, we will include the report in there as well.

Q: Is the review of this documentation ongoing?

A: It is. We took over in September and are actively engaged in the process. There are a variety of agencies involved in this site, we've had quite a lot of documents mailed to us and have poured through them. We've put a team of engineers and scientists together to really scrutinize all of the documentation. Spring 2001 is our goal to have the Preliminary Assessment complete and a matter of public record.

Q: Has there been any other studies done on the site? Has the Corps done any sampling?

A: I believe the DOE did a 1980 study and the most recent one was the ORISE report we've been talking about, which was done in 1999. The NYSDEC had also been doing some radiation and chemical evaluations in 1996. The Corps hasn't actually gone out and done its own sampling. We are in the process of review and evaluation. Because there's been so much collection of data, this has allowed us to accelerate the process because we didn't have to go into a lot of detail in the Site Inspection phase. We have such a wealth of information on this site that has allowed us to accelerate the Preliminary Assessment and send it off to Headquarters.

Q: We live near the site. If you remediate, is it safe for my grandchildren to play outside?

A: The Corps has a very safe track record. The Linde site is literally yards away from an elementary school and we take very precautionary measures there. We keep the dirt wet to prevent the spread of dust and have site air monitors, including one on the roof of the

school. If we choose to remediate and excavate soil, I think you can expect to see the same types of precautionary measures in place here.