

Witherspoon/Superfund Complaint Summary

AEC/DOE Inter-Office Memo 12/17/91

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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Subject: Witherspoon/Superfund Complaint Summary

We have recently received two separate items associated with a sale of scrap metal which occurred in the 1960 time frame and seemingly both are associated with Witherspoon. A little background accumulated to date shows the following items to be available to us for use.

1. The three sites in Oak Ridge began collecting scrap metal in the early 1950's and continuing even to the present having radioactive contamination. From the early 1950's through the late 1960's the metal was accumulated either at specific plant sites or at a common accumulation area known as the White Wing Yard.

2. The White Wing Yard was located along the White Wing Road (Highway between the Oak Ridge Turnpike and the Bear Creek Road. The White Wing was divided into three distinct areas with fences separating the three gates to control access, although a number of people had keys to the gates at all three sites. The yard was used to accumulate contaminated scrap metal and process equipment. The scrap was described as being uranium contaminated or as plutonium contaminated, based on the Atomic Energy Commission surface release guidance for radioactive materials in force the respective time periods.

3. In the late 1950's and early 1960's, the contractor and AEC brought vendor on site to smelt accumulated piles of scrap. The company name was something like-- Oak Ridge Processing Company-- and a name frequently associated with the company was that of Sam Greenfield.

4. Beginning in the 1963 time frame, the contractor (and AEC) initiated series of contracts and contract extensions which originated from solicitation of bids from prospective companies to come onto the site (Y-12, ORNL or K-25) and take ownership of scrap metal advertised as radioactively contaminated, usually, uranium contaminated. The solicitation spelled out the licensing requirements for the bidders to take ownership suggested (without guarantee) that tests and/or experience had shown the contaminated metal could be decontaminated through methods such as smelting leaving metal which could meet the surface release criteria then in effect. A slag which was more heavily contaminated. The slag could be returned to the company or managed otherwise if the vendor so chose and the method was in compliance with radioactive material handling requirements of the day.

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