



Recommendation No.4

March 28, 1995

Transuranic Waste

In response to the Transuranic Waste Treatment Plan in the Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement, because of uncertainty associated with the start-up of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP); danger created by the serious consequences of high activity Pu-238 or Pu-239 accident during storage or treatment at SRS; and the likelihood of the long term storage of transuranic waste at SRS after waste treatment, the SRS CAB recommends that DOE:

1. Categorize the SRS High Activity Transuranic waste as an urgent problem.
2. Expedite the selection of an appropriate organic treatment (e.g. destruction/stabilization) for SRS transuranic waste by year's end. To help make this selection, DOE should commission an independent "Blue Ribbon" panel of experts to review the treatment and waste-form options in a report to DOE and a presentation before the CAB at its November 1995 meeting.
3. Assign the highest priority to obtain funding no later than the FY97 budget for a capital line-item project to treat transuranic wastes and convert them into a stabilized form (e.g., vitrified).
4. Further, because of the increased probability of an accident during the scheduled repackaging of the Pu238/239 wastes on five of the TRU pads (storing approximately 400,000 curies), and to eliminate the need to handle these wastes twice, the SRS CAB recommends that DOE reconsider its repackaging plan carefully, possibly including a review by ISPR to determine if SRS can wait until a treatment option is available without incurring undue risk.

Agency Responses

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