



State of Utah

Department of
Environmental Quality

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NEWS RELEASE

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Test Results Complete

DOE drums of depleted uranium meet legal limits

Salt Lake City, Utah – An Oakridge, Tenn. lab notified the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) today that the samples of depleted uranium at EnergySolutions' low-level radioactive waste disposal facility meet health and safety standards set by the state.

The Division of Radiation Control (DRC) last month conducted its own tests at the direction of Governor Gary Herbert. The material was shipped to Utah in December from the Department of Energy's Savannah River, South Carolina, cleanup.

Eberline Services, Inc. analyzed 171 samples randomly collected from the 5,400 drums. DRC used an Environmental Protection Agency method under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act that determines the number of samples for a statistical approach to find out whether the waste concentrations exceed EnergySolutions' Class A license.

“We took a much more conservative and thorough approach to sampling,” said Amanda Smith, executive director of DEQ. “We believe that given questions raised about the nature of this waste, the state should do its due diligence and perform additional tests.”

Depleted uranium is classified as Class A low-level waste by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission but the Savannah River waste also contained trace amounts of other radioactive elements, including Technetium, which if concentrations are too high would be prohibited from disposal under state law.

The Radiation Control Board is promulgating a rule that would require a performance assessment to determine if depleted uranium can be safely disposed above ground at EnergySolutions. The waste material from Savannah River will continue to be monitored until the performance assessment is completed.

For more information, visit: <http://www.deq.utah.gov/Issues/hottopics/depleteduraniumtest.htm>

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