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July 21, 2003

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Mr. Wade Waters, Chair
SRS Citizens Advisory Board
308 Pinewood Dr.
Pooler, GA

SUBJECT: South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control responses to
the Citizens Advisory Board Recommendation 161 – Passive Treatment of
F/H Groundwater.

Dear Mr. Waters:

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) has received the Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) recommendation 161 that discusses the modifying of the groundwater corrective action systems at the F and H-Area at the SRS.

Enclosed please find DHEC's responses to the subject recommendation. We appreciate the Board's input and wish to encourage continued active participation in the challenging issues we face in the regulation and cleanup at the Savannah River Site. If you need further assistance, please contact Keith Collinsworth of my staff at (803) 896-8955.

Sincerely,

R. Lewis Shaw, P.E.
Deputy Commissioner
Environmental Quality Control

cc: J. I. Palmer, Jr., EPA Region IV
Dawn Taylor, EPA Region IV
Jeffrey M. Allison, DOE-SRS
Alice C. Doswell, DOE-SRS
Charlie Anderson, DOE-SRS
Myra Reece, EQC Lower

DHEC RESPONSE TO THE SRS CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD (CAB)
RECOMMENDATION NO. 161

At present the Department is considering shut down of the current groundwater cleanup system at the F & H Areas, which consists of groundwater extraction, treatment, and re-injection. However, the Department is hesitant to approve shut down of the current system until any ineffectiveness is substantiated or a replacement system is ready. While the Savannah River Site (SRS) asserts 1) diminishing effectiveness and 2) spreading of contaminants, the degree of these assertions is uncertain. Conversely, the current cleanup system is still effective for various contaminants, including toxic metals and radionuclides. A passive replacement system at this time is conceptual and will take time to implement. Given the potential continuing effectiveness of the current system and the timeline for implementation of a replacement system, the Department believes that shutdown of the current cleanup system is premature at this time. The Department will continue to evaluate system shut down as new information is received from SRS.