



*Many Voices Working for the Community*

# Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

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October 16, 2012

Susan Cange  
Deputy Manager for Environmental Management  
DOE-Oak Ridge Office  
P.O. Box 2001, EM-90  
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

Dear Ms. Cange:

## **Recommendation 211 : Recommendation on Availability of DOE Environmental Management Documents**

At our October 10, 2012, meeting the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board approved the enclosed recommendation regarding the availability and finding of documents online through the DOE Information Center.

The board recommends that steps be taken to streamline and simplify the search for available documents at the information center.

Please see the enclosed recommendation for details.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'David Martin'.

David Martin, Chair  
DM/rsg

Enclosure

**Recommendation on Availability of DOE Environmental Management Documents**

cc/enc:

Dave Adler, DOE-ORO

Cate Alexander, DOE-HQ

Fred Butterfield, DOE-HQ

Terry Frank, Anderson County Mayor

Connie Jones, EPA Region 4

Melissa Nielson, DOE-HQ

Melyssa Noe, DOE-ORO

John Owsley, TDEC

Mark Watson, Oak Ridge City Manager

Ron Woody, Roane County Executive

File Code 140



## Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board Recommendation 211: Recommendation on Availability of DOE Environmental Management Documents

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### Background

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has a robust public participation program related to Environmental Management (EM) decisions and actions on the Oak Ridge Reservation. Because the EM cleanup program is conducted under CERCLA (Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act) and is subject to the terms of the Federal Facilities Agreement, Administrative Record documents are housed at the DOE Information Center (IC) and made available to the public. Recently, in order to conserve resources, DOE has made some of the documents available only as digital files, either online or on CDs.

### Discussion

The availability of the documents online is a significant resource for stakeholders who wish to refer to documents within the Administrative Record for a cleanup project. However, finding these documents online can be challenging due to the poorly structured search function, found at <http://www.oakridge.doe.gov/external/DOEIC/tabid/304/Default.aspx> and the lack of an actual Online Catalog to view.

The basic search often yields many pages of documents that are not relevant to the search. The advanced search function is only usable if one already knows details of the document, which is often not the case. The “search tips” link does not work at all, so it is impossible to know what types of key words to use, where to place them if using the advanced search function, and how to optimize the search.

In addition, DOE often publishes an announcement of document availability before it is placed in the DOE IC. When the document is then requested by a stakeholder, the staff is unable to find it.

### Recommendations

1. The Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board recommends that DOE take the following actions to improve the ability of the general public and other stakeholders to find documents online:
  - (a) Provide an Online Catalog consisting of an expandable hierarchical matrix of Administrative Records with links to all documents within each one.
  - (b) Use a search function comparable to commonly available Internet search engines, including similar advanced features such as the ability to eliminate specific types of documents, for example, correspondence.
    - i. Provide detailed instructions on how to use basic and advanced functions at the “search tips” link, including common key words and searchable acronyms.
    - ii. Ensure that documents are searchable by key words that are applied consistently to all documents throughout a given Administrative Record, for example all documents referring only to the CERCLA Waste Disposal Cell should also be findable if the term EMWMF (Environmental Management Waste Management Facility) is used, and the reverse.

- iii. Ensure that an overarching Record of Decision which applies to several sites can be found by searching on the name of any one of those sites.
2. Ensure that documents are available at the DOE IC and/or online no later than the date when their availability is publicly announced.