

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314



REPLY TO  
ATTN OF:

SGPAAP

19 FEB 1971

SUBJECT:

Radioactive Waste Disposal (HQ USAF SCN 71-28)

TO:

AAC	AFSC	AFRES	HQ COMD USAF	TAC	USAFSS
ADC	ATC	CINCPACAF	MAC	USAFA	AFCS
AFLC	AU	CINCUSAFE	SAC	USAFSO	

(Civil Engineer and Surgeon)

1. The disposition of solid radioactive waste is strictly controlled in accordance with Technical Order 00-110N-2, "Radioactive Waste Disposal". The Technical Order provides for the San Antonio Air Material Area to act as the coordinating agency between field activities and Air Force disposal contractors in all matters relating to radioactive waste disposal. Land burial is not authorized without specific approval of the USAF Radioisotope Committee, AFLC.
2. For a number of years, land burial was authorized and Technical Order 00-110A-1, 25 May 1956, specified procedures to be followed including identification of the location on appropriate maps and fencing to prevent the entry of unauthorized personnel (Atch 1). Land burial was prohibited in subsequent editions of the Technical Order, but procedures to be followed for maintaining burial sites already in existence were not specified.
3. In keeping with a continuing responsibility of radiological safety, it is imperative that the location of existing sites be identified in the Base Master Plan (Tab C-1) and that a copy of this annotated Tab be provided to the USAF Radioisotope Committee (AFLC/SGPR, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio 45433). All available details concerning the construction of the disposal well, waste container, depth of burial, contents or other applicable data should accompany the Tab C submission. Tab A should be revised to include this historical data.
4. Because it is possible that the only records of a disposal site will exist in the memory of various personnel, it is requested that knowledge of a disposal site on any Air Force base be included in the submitted data. Approximate location and material disposed should be included, if known.

Appendix C

5. Replies should be forwarded to reach the USAF Radioisotope Committee no later than 90 days from the date of this letter. Negative replies are required.

6. Subsequent to receipt of the requested information, the USAF Radioisotope Committee will provide instructions concerning the maintenance of the burial sites.

FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF



BENJAMIN R. BAKER, COLONEL, USAF, MC  
Dep Director for Clinical & Aerospace Medicine  
Directorate of Professional Services  
Office of the Surgeon General

1 Atch

Extract to: 00-110A-1, 25 May 56

Cy to: ACIC  
AF/ASL  
NOPE  
AF/DEM  
AF/HEX  
AF/IGDIM  
AF/IGDIR  
AF/ISDC  
AMC

## Health Physics Precautions for Disinterment Operations

The precise manner of unearthing and removing buried radioactive wastes depends in great part on the nature of the site, type of burial container, and the costs of several alternative procedures. The following precautions are general in nature; they may not be pertinent to all operations. Their application will not significantly affect the cost of the removal operation, but they will minimize the risk of radiation exposure.

### Health Physics Precautions:

1. The disinterment operation should be observed by a Health Physicist or Bioenvironmental Engineer, to monitor for the existence of either external or internal hazards.
2. During removal operations, care should be taken to observe if the burial container is intact. A broken container raises the possibility of contamination of both soil and workers, and thus requires more stringent handling procedures.
3. If container is intact and very large, suggest it be opened so that the contents may be repackaged in suitable shipping containers. Workers using cutting tools during opening procedures should wear filter face masks.
4. If container is leaking or broken, samples of the surrounding soil should be collected and shipped for analysis to the USAF Radiological Health Laboratory. Appropriate identification should accompany each sample so forwarded. Be sure to send a control sample of similar, but uncontaminated soil from a nearby area.
5. Soil immediately surrounding a broken or leaking container should be placed in an interim storage container, pending evaluation of sample. If truly contaminated, this soil must also be disposed of as radioactive waste.
6. Upon completion of removal operation, annotate base master plan to record positive removal of any radioactive waste.