

ATSDR is the lead public health agency responsible for implementing the health-related provisions of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), also known as Superfund. ATSDR's primary goals are:

- to identify people at health risk because of their exposure to hazardous substances in the environment,
- to evaluate relationships between hazardous substances in the environment and adverse human health outcomes, and
- to intervene to eliminate exposure of health concern and prevent or mitigate adverse health outcomes related to hazardous substances in the environment.

Why Was the Oak Ridge Reservation Health Effects Subcommittee Formed?

The Oak Ridge Reservation Health Effects Subcommittee (ORRHES) was created in 1999 to provide advice and recommendations to ATSDR and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding off-site public health activities and research at the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge Reservation, in Tennessee. ATSDR and CDC requested nominations for the ORRHES and selected members based on criteria developed with input received from citizens. The selections were made according to the rules governing the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). The ORRHES is comprised of individuals with different backgrounds, interests, and expertise. The members of the subcommittee seek to involve and communicate with those who are interested in and affected by ATSDR and CDC public health activities at the Oak Ridge Reservation. The Subcommittee also encourages the public's input to the federal agencies and to learn about public health activities at the Oak Ridge Reservation.

How Is ATSDR Involved at the Oak Ridge Reservation?

ATSDR is conducting a public health assessment and a health education needs assessment at the site.

What Is a Public Health Assessment?

The public health assessment is an analysis of available information about releases from the Oak Ridge Reservation and a statement of the public health impact on people living around the site. The three primary sources of information used in the public health assessment are environmental data, health data, and reports of community health concerns.

The public health assessment is the primary public health process for determining which populations are exposed to hazardous substances, what the public health implications of exposures are, what should be done about those exposures, and whether there is a need for a more definitive investigation of the exposures or health of the exposed population.

In conducting the public health assessment, ATSDR will do the following tasks:

- Prepare summaries of relevant studies and investigations of releases from the Oak Ridge Reservation
- Evaluate past, present, and potential future exposures of off-site populations to hazardous substances
- Identify off-site populations exposed to hazardous substances at levels of health concern
- Assess any past, current, or future health impacts from these exposures
- Develop recommendations for follow-up public health activities needed to evaluate and mitigate or prevent human health effects
- Communicate ATSDR's findings to the public

What Is a Health Education Needs Assessment?

A health education needs assessment is different from a public health assessment. The purpose of the health education needs assessment is to identify educational health projects, community health concerns, and assess the local health care system's ability to address health concerns of the people who live near the Oak Ridge Reservation. With the help of the ORRHES, the needs assessment will identify health issues, health education needs, and available health resources within the community. The health education needs assessment began in 2001 and will continue during 2002 under a collaborative agreement between the Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics (AOEC), and George Washington University (GWU) located in Washington, DC. Scientists from MCP Hahnemann University (Philadelphia, PA) will also participate in conducting the needs assessment.

How Will the Health Education Needs Assessment be Conducted?

Scientists from GWU will contact citizens living around the Oak Ridge Reservation to collect the information through:

- Telephone surveys with key community resource contacts such as health care providers/health researchers, community organizations, health officials
- Small group meetings known as focus groups (with community members and leaders)

Why Is it Important to Collect this Information?

- It provides a way for the community and ATSDR to work closely in determining the types of community health education projects needed in Oak Ridge and the surrounding seven-county area
- It helps determine which community groups can benefit from health education efforts
- It determines how and what information needs to be presented in community education. Additional information on the health education needs assessment will be provided at the ORRHES meetings.

How Can I Participate?

The ORRHES holds meetings approximately every 6 weeks. Meetings are held within the Oak Ridge area and are announced to the public through local newspapers prior to each meeting date. The meetings are open to the public. You may call the ATSDR Field office or the ATSDR Atlanta office to check the dates for upcoming meetings.

If I am Unable to Attend a Meeting, may I Send Comments?

Yes. You can fill out a Community Health Concerns Comment Sheet at the Oak Ridge Field Office located at 197 S. Tulane Avenue. You may also contact La Freta Dalton, the ATSDR Designated Federal Official at the telephone number below to receive the sheet by mail or fax. Comments received will become part of the public record.

Who Can I Contact for More Information?

Bill Murray
ATSDR Liaison
Oak Ridge Field Office
Phone: 865-220-0295
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- OR -

La Freta Dalton
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Atlanta, GA 30333
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Hours of Operation:
Monday: 12^{PM} - 8:30^{PM}
Tuesday - Thursday: 10:30^{AM} - 7^{PM}
Friday: 7:30^{AM} - 3:30^{PM}

*Monday through Friday from 9^{AM} to 5^{PM} EST. When calling ATSDR's toll-free number, please mention that you are calling about the Oak Ridge Reservation Health Effects Subcommittee in Tennessee. If you call before or after office hours, please leave a message and someone will return your call.