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SRS radioactive emissions found higher than first reported

Residents living in Georgia's Burke and Screven counties, directly across the river from nuclear weapons complex, Savannah River Site (SRS), could be in more danger from radioactive contaminants than SRS originally calculated.

A September report from the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board shows that radiation doses emitted as a result of an accident at SRS could be 2.4 times higher than reports originally indicated. The report exposes flaws in preliminary data used to compute the impact, according to the Augusta Chronicle.

"This report confirms what Georgia WAND has suspected and expressed concerns about over the years. But residents in these vulnerable Georgia counties remain in danger and in the dark due to the lack of radiological monitoring that was halted by the Dept of Energy (DOE) in 2003," Georgia Women's Action for New Directions Executive Director, Bobbie Paul said.

Because wind currents can push evaporated water and rain containing radioactive releases from SRS to downwind counties in Georgia, contaminating crops, livestock, fish, and water consumed by the general public, Georgia WAND advocates for environmental monitoring in Georgia, independent of SRS.

"Our Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) calculated years ago that the impact of frequently eating collard greens in Burke County was risky while the state of South Carolina said that their monitoring models indicated no significant problem," Paul said. "The Defense Nuclear Facilities and Safety Board provides evidence why real-time monitoring is needed in Georgia counties near SRS. The area is contaminated and residents deserve to know what is going on. While the DOE and the nuclear industry may say they care about the people on the ground, I'd venture to say they care about protecting their investments more."