



Press Release

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Recent Radioactive Fallout from the Savannah River Site

A new study reports recent radioactive fallout downwind of the Savannah River Site (SRS) at least 50 times the background level.

In April 2003, The RadioActivist Campaign (TRAC) collected and analyzed samples around the SRS perimeter. TRAC found radioactive **cesium-137** at levels between 60 to 170 picocuries/kilogram toward the northeast of SRS.

The background level of cesium-137 around SRS is one picocurie/kilogram. That background remains from fallout from atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons.

Norm Buske, TRAC's Director, a physicist and oceanographer, says, "The recent radioactive fallout poses a threat to public health and safety and environmental quality, downwind of SRS." Radioactive cesium-137 has a half-life of 30 years. Cesium-137 emits beta-particles; ionizing radiation that causes cancer. Charles Utley, community organizer for the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, says "I think when it depends on a person's health they should be told what's going on."

TRAC estimates the fallout occurred within one year before the samples were collected in April 2003. The cesium-137 level at the time of the fallout has not been determined. TRAC's findings are reported on October 14, 2003, in "Under a Cloud - Fallout from the Savannah River Site."

The U.S. Department of Energy, SRS's owner and operator, states that no radioactive fallout event has occurred and that cesium-137 downwind of SRS is not above the barely detectable background level.

TRAC, based in Belfair, Washington, measures and publicizes radioactivity around nuclear facilities to promote public safety and site accountability. Buske has measured radioactivity around American and Russian nuclear facilities since 1983. Background information about TRAC is posted at: www.radioactivist.org.

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