URANIUM WORKING GROUP

Presentation on the Work Plan and Schedule of Public Meetings

Environment Virginia Symposium
April 10, 2012

Uranium Working Group Member Agencies

- Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME)
- Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Department of Health (VDH)

- *The UWG is deeply committed to effective collaboration. Even tasks identified below as "agency-specific" will require and receive input from other UWG members.

Previous Studies Conducted

- 1984 SENES Assessment of Risk & the associated Uranium Task Force Report
- National Academy of Sciences
- City of Virginia Beach
- Fairfax County Water Authority
- Roanoke River Basin Association
- Chmura Economics and Analytics
- RTI International

Governor's Directive

- Directed DMME, DEQ, and VDH to provide information to help the General Assembly assess whether the moratorium in the Commonwealth should be lifted and the proper way to regulate and monitor uranium mining and milling activity in Virginia.

- Identified important questions related to the **health and safety** of workers; public health and the environment; and, the **impact** to the socioeconomic vitality of the areas near potential uranium sites that must be addressed before a determination.

Governor's Directive

Issued January 19, 2012

- Provided 18 specific tasks, which included **identifying how the agencies' laws and regulations would need to be strengthened** to govern all aspects of mining and milling uranium in Virginia:
  - That would include a **complete life cycle analysis**; and,
  - Provide for regular and structured **reviews of risk,** potential **hazards** and operations in a collaborative and highly structured management and regulatory system.

Work Plan – All agencies

- **Review existing studies** on uranium mining and milling in Virginia.
- **Review** existing uranium mining and milling regulatory programs in other states and countries.
- **Review and summarize** pertinent information and studies from such groups as the International Atomic Energy Agency, the World Nuclear Association, etc.
- Identify how the agencies' **laws and regulations** would need to be strengthened to govern the complete life cycle of compliance for uranium mining and milling.

Work Plan – All agencies

- Assess Virginia's unique conditions, such as population density, rainfall, temperate climate, water table levels and geography.
- Assess economic impacts for the local community, region and the Commonwealth.
- Prepare a proposed unified emergency preparedness and response plan.
- Develop a conceptual public outreach process.
- Identify the necessary components of a full environmental impact analysis.

Work Plan – DMME

- Review the site-specific data provided by Virginia Uranium, Inc.
- Analyze baseline conditions at the Coles Hill site with regard to water, soil, ore and waste rock.

Work Plan – DMME

- Identify how DMME's laws and regulations would need to be strengthened to govern:
  - Uranium mine permitting process;
  - Mine worker health and safety plans and inspections;
  - Regulatory authority over waste rock containing naturally occurring radioactive minerals;
  - Requirements for mine site reclamation plans; and,
  - Performance bond and standards, surety.

Work Plan – DEQ

- Analyze the **baseline environmental conditions** using existing data.
- Conduct a **gap analysis** of site-specific data available.
- Review how DEQ programs and regulations would need to be strengthened for:
  - water quality monitoring for surface and ground waters;
  - air quality monitoring; and,
  - ensuring the adequacy of Virginia's water quality standards for ground and surface waters.

Work Plan – VDH

- Evaluate the **limitations** of available studies and recommendations of public health experts on the design of relevant epidemiological studies
- Determine and characterize **data available** on health outcomes related to exposures of concern
- Determine if current **tobacco use** surveillance is adequate for establishing **baseline data**.

Work Plan – VDH

- Identify how VDH's laws and regulations would need to be strengthened for:
  - regulatory authority over milling and tailings;
  - amending the existing NRC agreement, if needed;
  - regulatory authority over public drinking water;
  - any necessary testing or monitoring of private wells; and
  - development of both community and mine/mill worker health and safety standards.

Public Input

- Web-portal - **www.Uwg.Vi.Virginia.Gov**
  - Will post comments, questions and responses to questions
  - Will post research as it becomes available
- **Public meetings**
  - **June 18, 2012: 6:00 pm; Chatham High School** – presentations: mine permitting, environmental impact analysis & environmental monitoring of mine sites, disposal of mine waste, mine site reclamation. **Public comment**.

Public Input

- **August 2012** – presentations: water quality monitoring plan, air quality monitoring plan, Virginia water quality standards and waterworks regulations. **Public comment**.

- **October 2012** -presentations: public health and safety, mill licensing, tailings storage, disposal and monitoring, mill site closure and decommissioning, drinking water regulations, private well regulatory framework, recreational use of waters, reinstitution of the radon program, environmental monitoring, epidemiological surveillance. **Public comment**.

- **November 2012** - presentations: worker health and safety, unified emergency preparedness and response plan, the impact on the socioeconomic vitality of the area, and summary of findings. **Public comment**.

Working Group Activities To-date

- Reviewed studies.
- Identified issues from the Studies that need to be addressed.
- Developed a Work Plan.
- Developed two RFPs, proposals from the RFPs are being reviewed.
- Reviewed relevant programs of each of the three agencies.
- Reviewed NRC programs.
- Reviewed comments from NAS Public Meetings.

Questions?

VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Protecting You and Your Environment

DEQ
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

DMME Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy