4/30/83

STATE GROUNDWATER NEWS (cont.)

South Carolina - The draft environmental impact statement on the restart of the L-Reactor at the Savannah River plant by the Dept. of Energy is "environmentally unsatisfactory," the EPA has said. According to Arthur Linton of EPA Region IV, the draft leaves significant environmental issues unresolved the most important of which are: possible groundwater contamination, the potential destruction of nearby wetlands by heat effluent, and disposal of wastes generated by reactor operations. The development of a national pollutant discharge elimination system permit for the reactor is of "special concern," the agency said, as are methods for controlling groundwater contamination and treatment and disposal of hazardous wastes.

Paul

EPA SEEKS IMPROVED METHODS FOR ORGANICS SCREENING

The EPA has awarded a three-year contract to Battelle's Columbus Labs to develop new, improved methods for organic contaminants screening, the Overflow (9-10/83) reported. For each pollutant identified by the EPA as being of interest, Battelle will evaluate existing chemical analysis methods and determine if they can be improved. Should improvements appear feasible, researchers will develop and validate new methods. Typical new procedures would include screening protocols for analyzing water by compound class or compound-specific protocols for monitoring particular pollutants. In addition, strict criteria for taking and handling samples, calibrating instruments and collecting data will be established.

INTERNATIONAL GROUNDWATER NEWS

Canada - Underground storage tank leaks from accidental spills and illegal dumping are the prime cause of groundwater pollution in Manitoba, a provincial study has found. There are an estimated 150,000 underground tanks in the country and leakage tops the list of environmental concerns of the petroleum industry, Eco/Log Week (10/14) reported.

Italy - A major aquifer 1,400 feet below the town of Pozzuoli shows rising temperatures and the ratio of water to gases spewing from fumaroles in an extinct crater above the town is increasing. According to the head of the National Vulcanology Group, underground steam may be snapping rocks and causing many of the tremors the town has experienced over the past several months. All these signs indicate that if pressure rises sufficiently or if a quake allows steam to get to the surface - mud, rock and debris could be thrown into the air in a mud explosion. A similar event occurred in Guadeloupe in the Caribbean in 1976. Since August when earth tremors began to be accompanied by subterranean rumbles, half the townspeople of Pozzuoli have moved into tents outside the city (GWNL, 10/18).

U.K. - The British government is planning to disband the seven metropolitan area authorities which are responsible for managing two-thirds of the hazardous waste produced in the country. The idea is to redistribute their functions among numerous district councils which have never had responsibility for dealing with toxic wastes, the New Scientist (10/6) reported. In the case of the Greater London Council, the deputy head of scientific services Sam Radcliffe noted that the department has been in operation since 1869 and he doubted whether the London boroughs would be able to take on the breadth of work undertaken by GLC with its $4.5 million annual budget. "It's just not feasible to distribute our expertise amongst 32 boroughs," Radcliffe said.

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