

Region 4 (10-27-09) Statement.doc

To: **A. Stanley Meiburg, Acting Regional Administrator, EPA Region 4, Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth Street, SW, Atlanta, GA 30303)**

From: Margaret L. Jones, Scarboro (Oak Ridge, TN) community resident

I was born and raised in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, a small city located in the eastern portion of the state. Oak Ridge is well known for its nuclear weapons site and is credited with creating components of the Atomic Bomb. Residents in Oak Ridge, Tennessee are very familiar with the U.S. Department of Energy's Oak Ridge Reservation (code name K-25, X-10, and Y-12) commonly known as the "Plant."

"Several characteristics make evaluation of the potential off-site health effects from the ORR very complex and very challenging. In terms of variety and complexity of past operations and materials used (radionuclides and chemicals), the ORR is among the most complex sites in the world. The settings of the three main ORR (the plant sites code-named K-25, X-10, and Y-12), in a complex ridge-and-valley terrain, lead to some particularly complex effluent transport patterns and pathways for public exposure. The potential importance of Oak Ridge releases is heightened by the fact that there are no other communities closer to key production areas than at any other U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) site in the country."

In other words, of all the DOE sites in the entire United States of America, no other community is as close to a DOE facility, literally "in the back yard of the Plant", as our little Scarboro community, of which when we were growing up was approximately 99.9% Black. The entire Scarboro community, conservatively less than two miles in diameter, was initially known as Gamble's Valley. (Looking back one can only speculate what the engineers, who strategically designed the segregated community across the railroad tracks separating it from the rest of Oak Ridge, were gambling on happening).

Many residents, including (my family) I believe, have suffered numerous illnesses and even death as a result of the contamination of the air, soil, and water caused by the Oak Ridge nuclear reservation. As devastating as this may seem, it gets worse.

During the era of segregation, I wonder what options did Blacks have? Were they forced to live in a secluded community so close to the Plant? It was and still is a small friendly community where everyone knew and cared about each other. The question is, what makes this community different from any other racially segregated neighborhood? As stated above, Scarboro is **the closest residential area** to the nuclear reservation in Oak Ridge, so close it is even considered a part of the nuclear site. Some of the residents of Scarboro Community reside so close to the Plant that only a fence, approximately six feet tall, separates their backyard from the Plant. Climbing over or under that fence, has been no challenge for curious young residents of the community since the 1950's.

As a result of being in this location, "Scarboro Community" was exposed to multiple contaminants at any given time, which makes for increased health concerns. We, as residents

and former residents of Scarboro Community, believe that we are the victims of nuclear contaminate releases, brought on by the nuclear sites located literally in our back yard. "The Department of Energy (DOE) has repeatedly stated that releases posed no threat to the Scarboro community residents and that, "There is no distinctive difference between Scarboro and other comparable parts of Oak Ridge..." See the article the Scarboro Connection – The Trials of a Community, Attachment B. We strongly disagree. There has been numerous surveys done and articles written over the years which support our belief.

There were twelve (12) in my immediate family. Over the years, I have lost three family members to cancer. Currently, I have two additional family members who have been diagnosed with some form of cancer and another member who was diagnosed with neurological disorders. I know that my family does not stand alone, if you ask anyone from the Scarboro community today, most, if not all of the residents can say that they have had a family member or members and many of their friends who have been affected by an unusually high percentage of cancers, neurological disorders, memory loss, extreme numbness, kidney disorders, asthma, tumors, just to name a few of the common health issues. Many of these diseases have resulted in the premature deaths of Mothers, Fathers, brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles of the Scarboro community residents.

It has been noted that most contaminates can take up to 25-30 years to show up in your body. My generation is the generation who is being affected by these contaminates today. Scientists know very little about multiple toxins in the human body and the effects these multiple toxic chemicals could cause over time. It is time for something to be done!

How can Department of Energy (DOE) fix the wrong that was done to the Scarboro community?

- 1) Confess to their negligence and provide a formal apology to all living and deceased residents of Scarboro Community.
- 2) Equitable and fair restitution and compensation to the entire community (current and former residents).
- 3) Restore or buy-out the community/property and/or relocate them to up-to-date and safer housing (at the option of the family members).
- 4) Any additional restitution deemed fair and appropriate in a court of law.

In conclusion, I ask you to please hear our community crying out.

Respectfully yours,

Margaret L Jones

CEJA (Citizen for Environmental Justice for All)

Scarboro Community, Oak Ridge, TN.

Supporting Documents and Articles of Interest:

1. <http://health.state.tn.us/CEDS/OakRidge/ORidge.html>

2. Please refer to **Data Report of a Radiological Study Around the Oak Ridge Reservation, Tennessee in November 2004**, published 05/06/05. REV.2. Research, testing and publishing was performed by The RadioActivist Campaign (TRAC), led by Norm Buske and his team. The complete report can be accessed using this link: <http://www.radioactivist.org/ORRdata>

(Rev2).pdf

Oak Ridge Health Holocaust - Attachment C. The complete report can be accessed using this link: **<http://www.doewatch.com/or.html>**