



40-7102

March 18, 1994

Mr. Gary Comfort  
Fuel Cycle Licensing Branch  
Mail Stop 4-E4  
U.S. Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555

Subject: Shield Alloy Corporation Site,  
Newfield, Gloucester County, NJ

*Gary*  
Dear Mr. Comfort:

In February we had the opportunity to discuss the reason the ATSDR Regional Office had been contacting your office. In our conversation I advised that ATSDR had been contacted and petitioned by the Vineland Department of Health to investigate community health concerns relative to the radioactive slag piles that are concurrently stored on site. I mentioned in our conversations that I had spoken with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and Energy (NJDEPE) project lead person, Ms. Donna Gaffigan. Donna indicated that the NJDEPE did not have in its possession any slag pile sampling data but advised me that the NRC had 1988 contracted with Oak Ridge to evaluate the radioactive slag piles. The ATSDR will not be able to respond to the community concerns without having data/sampling information to evaluate health issues, if any exist.

As we discussed you advised that the Shield Alloy Site is a state lead site and currently not on the Federal Fund listing. ATSDR under superfund legislation is mainly responsible for public health in and around federal superfund sites inclusive of federal facilities that are National Priority List (NPL). ATSDR does interface and work with state lead sites on a national basis as I have in Region II with both New York State and New Jersey.

The intent of ATSDR in attempting to secure Oak Ridge data and or any new data generated from the upcoming Environmental Impact Statement would be to access all available data in health consultation format and respond back to the petitioner(s). Please advise on how we can proceed and if your legal office has any issues/concerns about releasing the Oak Ridge data to us. If so, our legal office may be able to assist in clarifications, if required.

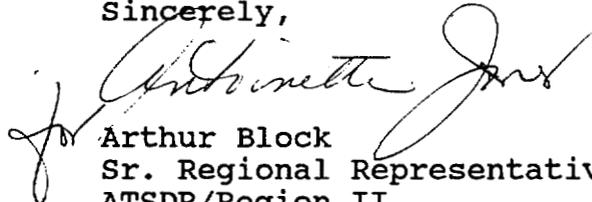
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I have enclosed fact sheets about ATSDR and the health consultation process. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Arthur Block  
Sr. Regional Representative  
ATSDR/Region II

Enclosures

cc:

George Buynoski/OAA/ORO  
Robert Williams/DHAC/OD

# **Health Consultations**

*This fact sheet was developed to provide the public with information about ATSDR Health Consultations. ATSDR hopes it is useful to you in understanding what a Health Consultation is and how it can help you. You may have questions the fact sheet doesn't answer or need more information about ATSDR and its activities. A contact person is listed at the end of the fact sheet.*

## **What is ATSDR?**

ATSDR is the **Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry**, a federal public health agency. ATSDR is part of the Public Health Service in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. ATSDR is not a regulatory agency like the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Created by Superfund legislation in 1980, ATSDR's mission is to **prevent or mitigate adverse human health effects and diminished quality of life resulting from exposure to hazardous substances in the environment**. Through its programs -- including surveillance, registries, health studies, environmental health education, and applied substance-specific research -- and by working with other federal, state, and local government agencies, ATSDR acts to protect public health.



## **What is a Health Consultation?**

An ATSDR Health Consultation is **not** the same thing as a medical exam, a community health study, or a Public Health Assessment. It can sometimes lead to those things, as well as other public health activities.

A Health Consultation provides advice on a specific public health issue related to real or possible human exposure to toxic material. Anyone can request a Health Consultation. ATSDR receives the most requests from EPA and state and local health and environmental departments, and provides about 1,000 Health Consultations per year.

A Health Consultation is a way for ATSDR to respond quickly to a need for health information on toxic substances and make recommendations for actions to protect the public's health. ATSDR staff evaluate information available about toxic material at the site, determine whether people might be exposed to it, and report what harm exposure might cause. Health Consultations may consider —

- what the levels (or "concentrations") of hazardous substances are
- whether people might be exposed to contamination and how (through "exposure pathways" such as breathing air, drinking or contacting water, contacting or eating soil, or eating food)
- what harm the substances might cause to people (or the contaminants' "toxicity")
- whether working or living nearby might affect people's health
- other dangers to people, such as unsafe buildings, abandoned mine shafts, or other physical hazards

## What Happens After the Health Consultation?

Every Health Consultation includes ATSDR's conclusions about public health hazards and recommendations for actions to protect the public's health. ATSDR's recommendations can cover many activities by EPA and state environmental and health agencies, as well as by ATSDR. For example, ATSDR recommendations can contribute to —

- site cleanup
- keeping people away from contamination and physical dangers — for example, by fencing the site
- giving residents acceptable drinking water
- relocating exposed people
- community environmental health education for residents and health care providers to inform them about site contaminants, harmful health effects, and ways to reduce or prevent health effects
- an ATSDR or state health study

In addition, a Health Consultation can lead to other ATSDR activities -- specifically, a **Public Health Assessment** or **Public Health Advisory**.

ATSDR Public Health Assessments report on sites but in more detail. They rely on three main types of information —

- **environmental data**, such as information available on contaminants and how people could come in contact with them
- **health data**, including available information on community-wide rates of illness, disease, and death compared with national and state rates
- **community concerns**, such as reports from the public about how the site affects their health or quality of life

Public Health Advisories are notices from ATSDR's administrator to EPA's administrator. They are used when sites pose an immediate and significant threat to people.

**Fact sheets are available on Public Health Assessments, Public Health Advisories, and other ATSDR activities. If you want to know more about ATSDR, or if you have health concerns about a site or information to share about ways people might have been or might now be exposed to hazardous substances, please contact the person listed below.**

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### For more information, call or write:

Karen Holmes-Westwood  
Community Involvement Specialist  
ATSDR-Division of Health Assessment  
and Consultation  
1600 Clifton Road, NE (E32)  
Atlanta, Georgia 30333  
1-800-447-4784; then dial 329-1175

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To carry out its mission and to serve the needs of the American public, ATSDR conducts activities in the following areas:

#### ***PUBLIC HEALTH ASSESSMENTS***

- Evaluate data and information on the release of hazardous substances into the environment to assess any current or future impact on public health, develop health advisories or other health recommendations, and identify studies or actions needed to evaluate and mitigate or prevent human health effects. ATSDR conducts health assessments for all waste sites on the National Priorities List and in response to petitions from concerned individuals and organizations.

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#### ***HEALTH INVESTIGATIONS***

- Increase our understanding of the relationship between exposure to hazardous substances and adverse human health effects, through epidemiologic, surveillance, and other studies of toxic substances and their effects.

#### ***EXPOSURE AND DISEASE REGISTRY***

- Establish and maintain a registry of persons exposed to hazardous substances and a registry of serious diseases and illnesses in persons exposed to hazardous substances in the environment.

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#### ***EMERGENCY RESPONSE***

- Provide health-related support to states, local agencies, and health care providers in public health emergencies involving exposure to hazardous substances, including health consultations on request and training for first responders.

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#### ***TOXICOLOGICAL PROFILES***

- Summarize and make available to the public data on the health effects of hazardous substances, identify significant gaps in knowledge, and initiate research in toxicology and health effects where needed.

#### ***HEALTH EDUCATION***

- Develop and disseminate to physicians and other health care providers materials on the health effects of toxic substances, establish and maintain a publicly accessible inventory of hazardous substances, and maintain a list of sites closed or restricted to the public because of hazardous substance contamination.

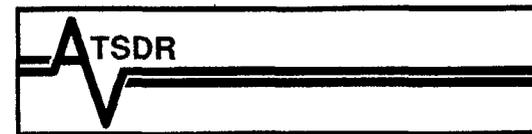
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#### ***APPLIED RESEARCH***

- Conduct or sponsor research to increase scientific knowledge about the effects on human health of hazardous substances released from waste sites or of other releases into the environment.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:



**ATSDR**

**1600 CLIFTON ROAD, N.E. (E-28)**

**ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30333**

**(404) 639-0727**

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## Fact Sheet

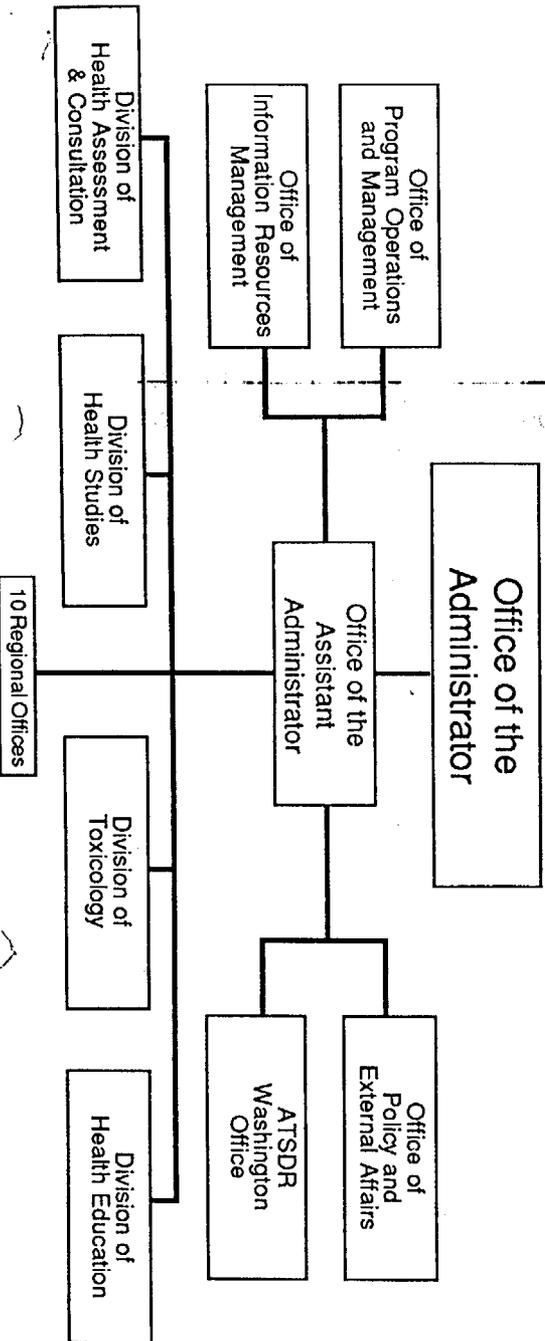
The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) is a federal public health agency located in Atlanta, Georgia. It is part of the Public Health Service within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Created by Superfund legislation in 1980, ATSDR's mission is to prevent or mitigate adverse human health effects and diminished quality of life resulting from exposure to hazardous substances in the environment.



October 1990

**ATSDR**  
1600 Clifton Road, N.E. (E-28)  
Atlanta, Georgia 30333

# Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry



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