



8.4 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEILLANCE

R. W. Hanf

During January 2002, the number of teacher-operated radiological air sampling stations near the Hanford Site was reduced from nine to four. All of the stations are still operating; however, sample collection responsibilities are being performed by staff from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory's Surface Environmental Surveillance Project rather than area teachers. The five stations that were affected are located in Benton City, Kennewick, Mattawa, Othello, and Pasco, Washington. The decrease in teacher-operated stations occurred in anticipation of budget reductions that were expected to take place later in 2002. The stations that continue to be operated by area teachers are located in Basin City, Richland, and Toppenish, Washington, and in north Franklin County at Edwin Markham Elementary School. These four stations have large, lighted displays that provide real-time weather and background radiation information to the public as well as general information on station equipment, sample types, and analyses (Figure 8.4.1).

Two teachers working near the stations were selected to manage each station. The equipment at each station includes air samplers to collect airborne dust and moisture for radiological analysis, a variety of weather monitors, and detectors to monitor ambient radiation levels. The teachers are responsible for collecting the air samples, preparing the samples and collection records for submission to the analytical laboratory, monitoring the performance of station equipment, performing minor station maintenance, and participating in scheduled training. They also serve as points of contact for local citizens. The station managers' names and telephone numbers are provided on the displays for anyone desiring additional information about the purpose of the station, station equipment, or analytical data. Pacific Northwest National Laboratory personnel work closely with the teachers to provide training, maintain station equipment and displays, and coordinate sampling and analytical efforts with other

Hanford Site environmental surveillance personnel. Computerized data collection systems have been installed at each station to collect and display weather and background radiation information. The data in the computers at Toppenish and Richland are accessible via telephone modem. The data from Basin City and Edwin Markham School are transmitted by radiotelemetry to the Hanford Meteorology Station computer where they are posted on the Internet every quarter hour (<http://etd.pnl.gov:2080/HMS/stamap.htm>). These stations are currently furnishing weather data to the Washington State Department of Transportation and the National Weather Service. Analytical results for the radiological air samples collected at these stations during 2002 are discussed in this report in Section 4.1. Results of gamma radiation measurements obtained at the stations during 2002 are discussed briefly in Section 4.7 of this report.

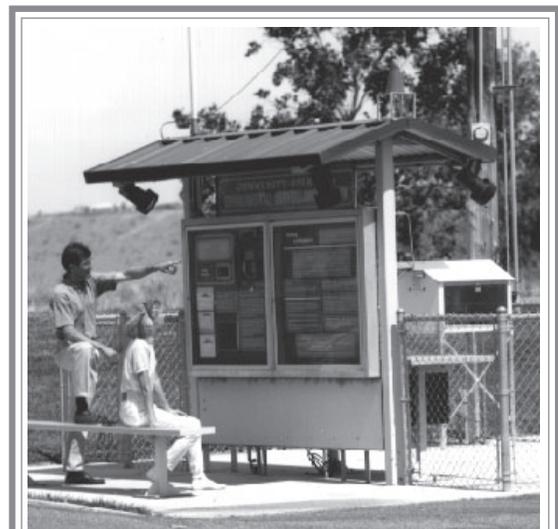


Figure 8.4.1. Community Members See Environmental Surveillance in Action at a Community-Operated Environmental Surveillance Station in Richland, Washington