



Nevada Operations Office News

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NNSA to Conduct Annual Sampling at Salmon Site

From April 15 to 19 the National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Operations Office (NNSA/NV) will collect water samples in Lamar County, Mississippi. The Mississippi Division of Radiological Health will join the NNSA/NV and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Radiation and Indoor Environments National Laboratory in conducting the annual water sampling program. In addition to the annual sampling, every three months the Mississippi Department of Health collects water samples from wells on the Salmon site.

As part of this annual program, water samples were collected from various homes in the area around the Salmon site. Starting next year, the NNSA/NV will collect water samples from each of the water franchises serving the homes instead of specific homes. This is due to the completion of a new water system installed by the NNSA/NV to ease public concern about radioactive contamination to the area's groundwater.

The Salmon site, located in a sparsely populated area about 21 miles southwest of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, was the location of two underground nuclear tests. The *Salmon* and *Sterling* tests, conducted in 1964 and 1966 respectively, provided scientists with information related to the detection of underground detonations of nuclear devices and compared the seismic difference between an underground nuclear test and an earthquake to enhance detection of underground detonations being conducted by other countries.

Environmental sampling of the area's water, soil and vegetation, taken over a period of more than 25-years since the Salmon site was closed, has shown no evidence of radioactivity entering the food or drinking water supplies of area residents. Results from this year's survey are planned for publication this fall in the *Annual Water Sampling and Analysis at the Salmon Test Site Area*. Past survey results are available at the Purvis Public Library located at 122 Shelby Speights Drive, Purvis, Mississippi.