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Responses to Comments on Draft RML IRF Emergency Response Plan

Letter #4

From: Vicky Bohlig [<mailto:boh@bitterroot.net>]

Sent: Friday, June 30, 2006 4:08 PM

To: Lankford, David (NIH/OD) [E]

Subject: Comments on RML IRF Emergency Response Plan

David W. Lankford

NIH

Bethesda, MD

Dear Sir:

As I read through the Emergency Response Plan for the RML, I appreciated the thoughtful work represented in much of the report. Details for emergency response within the campus is impressive.

However, I saw this report/plan was incomplete. It did not give me the information I have been looking for and asking about for over 4 years. I have asked repeatedly, as a concerned citizen, to what extent is the local community expected to take on the emergency response responsibility in the unlikely but possible event of public exposure to health hazards from the RML, whether by accident or by terrorism? It appears at this time the report infers Ravalli County/Hamilton City and the other local responders will bear much more responsibility and liability than locals may have expected.

[R4.1] The response to this comment may be found in the response to WVE comment # 1 Please see that response (R2.1).

There also seems to be a major omission in the ERP concerning the RML's role in inter-relationship with these groups outside the campus if this event ever happens. I feel this oversight may be corrected with much more information and mitigation options.

[R4.2] The response to this comment may be found in the response to WVE comment # 7. Please see that response (R2.8).

I realize that the RML has been working with the County Board of Health, County Emergency Service, the Terrorism Preparedness Task Force, the Anti-Terrorism Task Force and other groups and organizations in attempting to co-ordinate and communicate effectively. This is a good effort.

But referring to these efforts in "mention-only" mode within this ERP does not meet the charge to truly inform the Ravalli County citizens in detail about citizen emergency procedures and plans. The ERP leaves this up in the air, leaving it to whom? The County? The City? There have been notices that joint emergency work is happening but where is the information found in

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a consolidated form? What better document than in this ERP? It is certainly in RML's best interest to lead the local emergency response community. It has vast and great resources to share. And it would help continue its good neighbor public relations. It is imperative that the people understand and support the joint efforts of their local emergency response groups with the RML. The community must be shown that the special impacts created by the RML IRF on the City and County will be assessed and be supplemented. This will help the people trust that the NIH/RML will not be passing liabilities onto this rural community.

[R 4.3] The response to this comment may be found in the response to WVE comments #1 and # 7. Please see those responses (R2.1 and R2.8).

Thank you most sincerely,

Vicky Bohlig

Citizen member of CLG

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