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Date: 5/16/2013 5:35:06 PM

Subject: Bridgeton/West Lake Briefing

Attachments: bridgetonblog.docx

For tomorrow's briefing with congressional staff.

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In a complex environmental health situation, like Bridgeton and West Lake, EPA works hard to follow proven scientific procedures. That takes some time, and that's why the agency is carefully reviewing the ASPECT radiation data before sharing it with the public. But the public should expect that how we collect, analyze, and explain data uses the best accepted work methods.

I hope you folks, who rely on data every day to make complex decisions, will refuse to endorse questionable info and will criticize those who produce it and promote it.

Not everyone has EPA's assets, but everyone should observe basic scientific methods. If they don't, their claims are not just basically worthless as useful information, they're positively harmful because they confuse people and make it harder for solid information to get the traction it has earned. The blog yesterday with the Geiger counter story is a great example of how not to communicate with people who want to have accurate information so they can make good decisions:

No description of the procedures followed or calibration performed. No description of the writer's scientific training and experience using and interpreting radiation data. No correlation of their numbers with other scientific information collected by accepted methods.

But plenty of conclusions that violate just about every principle of doing good science and communicating it responsibly:

1) Claim that SSO interacting with radioactive material: data do not establish that
2) Using the phrase "radioactive dirty bomb": ridiculous and inflammatory
3) Speculating what will happen "if the site does go up": absurd and harmful

Saying this because this agency, and the MDNR, have a responsibility to tell responsible people the best information that we have, and to point out when others are breaking those rules.