



Watts Bar Reservoir

Historical Document

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During the past 50 years waterborne contaminants (radionuclides, metals, and organic compounds) were released from the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) Oak Ridge Reservation, into tributaries of the Clinch River and were transported into the Watts Bar Reservoir. Contaminants from the Oak Ridge Reservation, and other industrial sites in the Tennessee River watershed, were found in the reservoir suspended in water, bio-concentrated in fish, and bound to particles suspended in the water or settled out in the sediment.

The Watts Bar Reservoir study area includes the Clinch River and the Lower Watts Bar Reservoir. The Clinch River extends from Melton Hill Dam to where the Tennessee and Clinch Rivers join in Kingston, Tennessee. This includes the Poplar Creek embayment from the mouth of Poplar Creek along the Clinch River to its joining with East Fork Poplar Creek. The Lower Watts Bar Reservoir stretches from the confluence of the Tennessee River and the Clinch River downstream to the Watts Bar Dam.

ATSDR scientists conducted a health consultation, a community and physician education program, and an exposure investigation in response to health concerns of residents living in the area of the Watts Bar Reservoir.

Health Consultation

- **Lower Watts Bar Reservoir Health Consultation, February 1996**

(<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/HAC/pha/PHA.asp?docid=1361&pg=0>)

The 1996 health consultation on the Lower Watts Bar Reservoir, ATSDR concluded that PCBs in lower Watts Bar Reservoir fish pose a public health concern.

- **Summary Lower Watts Bar Reservoir Health Consultation, February 1996**

([docs/Appendices D.pdf#page=24](#))

This document is a summary of the Lower Watts Bar Reservoir Health Consultation.

Exposure Investigation

- **Watts Bar Reservoir Exposure Investigation, March 1998 (docs/Watts Bar Exposure Investigation.pdf)** [PDF, 36 KB]

ATSDR conducted an exposure investigation to find out whether people eating turtles or fish from the Watts Bar Reservoir were exposed to elevated levels of PCBs and mercury. Analysis of the blood samples obtained showed that the levels of PCBs and mercury found were very similar to the levels found in the general U.S. population.

- **Summary Watts Bar Reservoir Exposure Investigation, March 1998**

([docs/Watts Bar EI Brief.pdf](#)) [PDF, 32 KB]

This document is a summary of ATSDR's Exposure Investigation at Watts Bar Reservoir.

Educational Program

- **Community and Physician Education: Health Risks Associated with PCBs in Reservoir Fish, September 1996 (http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/HAC/oakridge/phact/c_4.html#3210)**
In September 1996, ATSDR provided educational programs on PCBs in fish to local residents and health care providers.

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Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 4770 Buford Hwy NE, Atlanta, GA 30341
Contact CDC: 800-232-4636 / TTY: 888-232-6348

