



PROPOSED STONEYHILL NORM TREATMENT FACILITY

Public exhibition

Wednesday 3 March 2010 - Noon to 6pm

Followed by presentation, from 6.30pm to 8pm

Longhaven Hall, Longhaven, Peterhead AB42 0NU

Recycling and resource management company SITA UK has teamed up with Nuvia, one of the UK's leading radiation protection and radioactive waste experts, to prepare and submit a planning application to Aberdeenshire Council.

We are jointly proposing to change the use of an existing waste processing building on the Stoneyhill landfill site, so that equipment from the oil and gas industry contaminated with Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM) can be treated on the site and recycled. The resulting mineral scale will be mixed with cement and cast into drums prior to disposal in the landfill.

We are inviting members of the community to a public exhibition, where SITA UK and Nuvia experts will be available to explain the plans, answer questions and listen to your views.



THE PROPOSAL

SITA UK currently operates the landfill facility at Stoneyhill, which is four miles south west of Peterhead and 23 miles north of Aberdeen. The site already has planning permission from Aberdeenshire Council for the disposal of Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM). An application has been made to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) for the disposal of NORM waste and a decision on the granting of an authorisation is expected soon.

SITA UK has entered into a joint venture with Nuvia to utilise an existing building on the site to establish a treatment facility to safely treat and process steel pipes and other components from the oil and gas industry containing very low levels of NORM. This will be achieved by processing to remove the mineral scale that builds up naturally over time in the pipes and other equipment, so they can be re-used or recycled.

NORM scale build-up within the pipes and components develops in much the same way as natural limescale is created in a kettle over a period of time.

Offshore equipment in need of de-scaling will be brought into Peterhead or Aberdeen ports, before being taken by road to Stoneyhill, via the A90.

Equipment requiring de-scaling will be delivered in intermittent batches as a shipment arrives at the quayside. The nature of offshore deliveries may result in eight or ten lorry loads arriving over one or two days, and then perhaps nothing for the rest of the week. On average, the deliveries to Stoneyhill will be equivalent to one or two per day.

The pipes and components will be safely stored, then jet-washed in purpose-built and sound-proofed booths inside the building. Once de-scaled, they will either be re-used in the oil industry or recycled. The scale that is removed will be de-watered and carefully collected, before being mixed

with cement in a quality controlled process. This mixture will then be cast into drums and landfilled at Stoneyhill in a safe and secure manner.

The process that will be utilised is a proven, safe and mature technology. The levels of any radioactivity are sufficiently low that the intended proposal will have no adverse impact on the natural background radiation levels in the surrounding area.

The actual volume of NORM scale to be treated and disposed of is extremely small – typically it might be 50 to 100 tonnes a year, whereas, in contrast, the landfill site takes up to 300,000 tonnes of general waste per year.

We estimate that up to 13 jobs will be created to run and maintain the facility.





WHAT IS NORM?

Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM) is the term used to describe radioactive materials that exist naturally in the geological environment.

NORM is found in a variety of bulk commodities, process wastes and commercial items, such as sands, china clays and soils, granite, coal, groundwater, oil and gas.

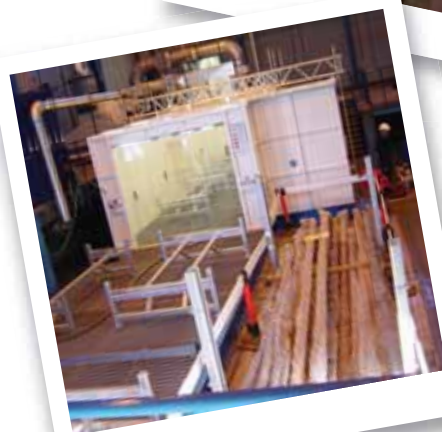
Although the concentration of NORM in most natural substances is low, almost any operation in which material is extracted from the earth and processed can result in the concentration of NORM.

NORM occurs in small quantities in the oil and gas industry where minerals containing NORM are deposited as scale within pipework and other equipment.

The associated radioactivity is measured in units of radioactivity called becquerels.

The NORM that we are proposing to treat and dispose of has very low radioactivity levels, which result in extremely low risk. The NORM is likely to have an average radioactivity level of between 20 and 100 becquerels per gram.

- A kilogram of coffee beans has an activity of 1,000 becquerels
- A bunch of bananas contains about 80 becquerels
- A healthy human being has 4,000 becquerels per kilogram.



Pictures showing the NORM de-scaling process, taken at a similar site designed and operated by Nuvia in Winfrith, Dorset.



WHY IS THIS FACILITY NEEDED?

To date, oil and gas companies have either had this NORM removed from pipes and other equipment offshore and discharged directly into the sea, or removed it at a site in Aberdeen, which has been allowed to discharge the waste just offshore. However, as a result of international agreements and legislation to safeguard the marine environment and the seabed, offshore discharges must be reduced by the end of the decade and the facility in Aberdeen will no longer be permitted to discharge to sea from 2011.

Therefore, new treatment and disposal facilities are urgently required to ensure oil and gas companies can continue to operate in an environmentally safe and lawful manner.

Our proposal will provide a vital service to all North Sea oil and gas operators who employ thousands of people and make a vital contribution to the local and wider Scottish economy.

SITA UK

SITA UK, a subsidiary of SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT, is a recycling and resource management company. We deliver sustainable and increasingly innovative solutions for the public, local government, industry and commerce, enabling our customers to minimise the impact of their waste on the environment.

NUVIA

Nuvia is one of the UK's leading independent radiological service providers, providing radiation protection and radioactive waste management services to industry, and emergency response and clean up services to Government and regulators. We have 20 years' experience in designing and operating NORM de-scaling facilities in the UK.

CONTACT US

For more information, or to talk to us about the proposals, please contact us by using the information below.

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