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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
DEPARTMENT OF LIFE SCIENCES
USAF ACADEMY, COLORADO 80840



1 May 1973

MEMORANDUM: DRUM DISPOSAL

1. Exclusive of the method finally chosen for the disposition of herbicide Orange, the problem of drum disposal will remain. The current emphasis in solid waste management is on recycling. Thus, the obvious solution to the drum disposal problem is to rinse and re-use the 55 gallon drums; however, certain political and economic factors may discourage this option.
2. Investigations will be initiated at Hill AFB, Utah, on the technical feasibility of various drum disposal options. Economic and engineering factors will be evaluated for the following options:
 1. Rinse/Re-use
 2. Crush/Scrap
 3. Crush/Bury

Studies will investigate the availability of local markets for scrap metal, the cost of rinsing and the fate of the rinse solution, and the extent of markets for used, "clean", 55 gallon drums.

3. One method being given serious consideration as a method for drum disposal is "cathodic destruction" or "galvanic destruction". This method involves the shallow burial of the drums in alkaline-saline soils and subsequent subjection to low ampere alternating current. Cathodic protection equipment previously purchased and planned for use in an existing Air Force facility is available for drum disposal experimentation. Rectified AC current will be applied in such a manner as to significantly increase the corrosive destruction of the shallow-buried drums. Theoretical estimates indicate significant destruction of the drums in four months. An accurate time frame for complete destruction of the drums (and cost comparison data) should be available by 1 September 1973.

Prepared by: Lt Wachinski