U.S. Department of Energy

OAK RIDGE OPERATIONS OFFICE

ANNOUNCEMENT

3831

November 13, 2001

SUBJECT: THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN OPEN SEASON

The Open Season for the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) will begin November 15, 2001, and run through January 31, 2002. If you are covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), or the CSRS Offset System, you should give serious consideration to maximizing your TSP contributions. The TSP is an integral part of your retirement benefits, particularly for employees covered under FERS. The earlier you begin to make contributions to the TSP, the more money you will have at the time of retirement. You are reminded that contributions to the TSP are tax deferred. Not only do you postpone paying taxes on your contributions to your TSP account, the earnings on your account are also tax deferred. This means you do not have to pay taxes on your TSP account earnings until you receive the money, thereby keeping more money invested and working for you.

Employees who have personal identification numbers through the Employee Self Service (ESS) feature of the Corporate Human Resources Information System may make TSP changes through the ESS web site at https://mis.doe.gov/ess/. These changes include designating an amount or percentage to be contributed to the TSP per pay period and canceling TSP deductions.

Changes in the amount allocated to each of the 5 TSP funds (G, F, C, S, and I) must be made using the TSP web site at http://www.tsp.gov, the ThriftLine at 504-255-8777, or by requesting Form TSP-50, Investment Allocation, from the Personnel and Management Analysis Branch and submitting it directly to TSP office address as specified on the form.

Employees who want to begin TSP contributions should visit the Personnel and Management Analysis Branch (PMAB) in Room 1221 of the Federal Building for the necessary forms. Forms will also be available in Room 32 of the Office of Scientific and Technical Information.

This open season, contribution limits will be 12 percent for FERS employees and 7 percent for CSRS employees. These percentages will continue to rise 1 percent annually until 2006 when percentage limitations will be eliminated, and employees will be restricted only by limitations imposed by the Internal Revenue Service.

The limit placed on contributions to the TSP by the Internal Revenue Service for 2002 is $11,000. FERS employees whose salary exceeds $105,000 per year should keep this limit in mind when deciding on the amount to contribute to their TSP account each pay period. FERS employees will only receive agency matching contributions on the first 5 percent of basic pay contributed each pay period, and employees who reach their annual limit before the end of the year will have their contributions and the agency matching contributions stopped. As a result, these employees will not receive the full amount of agency matching contributions that they would have received if their own contributions had been slightly less each pay period but had continued over every pay period throughout the year. For detailed information on how to spread contributions over the entire year, see the TSP Fact Sheet, "Annual Limit on Elective Deferrals," at http://www.tsp.gov/forms/index-factsheets.html.

DISTRIBUTION: TO ALL ORO, YAO & OSTI EMPLOYEES **No: 04**

Employees may stop TSP contributions at any time. Contributions discontinued **during** an Open Season, may be resumed during the next Open Season. Employees who choose to discontinue contributions **outside** an Open Season must skip one Open Season before resuming contributions.

PMAB has brochures and pamphlets which describe various options related to the TSP available for interested employees. The TSP web site at http://www.tsp.gov has information regarding open season and other pertinent facts. Questions regarding TSP contributions should be directed to your Human Resources Specialist.

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