

November 7, 2003

Mr. George W. Dowell  
Geoelectronics  
P.O. Box 461  
New London, MO 63459

SUBJECT: UNAUTHORIZED DISTRIBUTION OF PRODUCTS CONTAINING  
NRC LICENSED MATERIAL ON THE INTERNET

Dear Mr. Dowell:

This is a follow up to a October 23, 2003, telephone conversation between you and Mr. George Parker of my staff. Based on that telephone conversation, it is our understanding that you removed americium-241 (Am-241) foils from smoke detectors and placed the foils in a machined brass holder then covered the holder with a thin mylar window to produce an alpha source. You then distributed these sources via eBay on the Internet. It was also our understanding that you were not aware that the removal of Am-241 from smoke detectors is not exempt from the regulations and that an NRC license was required to distribute these items within the United States. At the conclusion of the conversation, you indicated you understood our position and that you do not plan to continue selling or distributing any product containing radioactive materials.

We would like to inform you that the NRC's regulations allow the issuance of civil sanctions to be taken directly against individuals who possess or distribute these devices without a license. While we have elected not to take enforcement action against you this time, please be aware that similar actions in the future could lead to formal NRC enforcement action against you.

Please feel free to contact Mr. Parker of my staff if you have any questions. Mr. Parker can be contacted at (800) 522-3025 or (630) 829-9869.

You are not required to respond to this letter. However, should you choose to respond, your response should be sent to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: George Parker, 801 Warrenville Road, Lisle, IL 60532-4351 within 30 days of the date of this letter.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and your response to this letter, if you choose to provide one, will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of the NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> the Public Electronic Reading

G. Dowell

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Room. To the extent possible, your response should not include any personal privacy, proprietary, or safeguards information so that it can be made available to the Public without redaction.

Sincerely,

***/RA/***

Kenneth G. O'Brien, Chief  
Materials Inspection Branch

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| OFFICE | RIII      |  | RIII     |  | RIII     |  | RIII |  |
| NAME   | Parker:mb |  | Wiedeman |  | O'Brien  |  |      |  |
| DATE   | 10/24/03  |  | 11/06/03 |  | 11/07/03 |  |      |  |

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