

040-08502  
SUA-1341



July 9, 2012

via Email [anton.vegel@nrc.gov](mailto:anton.vegel@nrc.gov) and FedEx

Mr. Elmo E. Collins, Regional Administrator  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Region IV  
1600 East Lamar Blvd  
Arlington, TX 76011-4511

RE: Uranium One USA Inc. Response to Confirmatory Action Letter  
Willow Creek ISR Project  
NRC License Number SUA-1341

Dear Mr. Collins:

Uranium One USA, Inc. (Uranium One) is in receipt of the Confirmatory Action Letter dated July 5, 2012 that pertains to the pressurized drum of yellowcake incident that occurred at a uranium refinery operated by Cameco in Blind River, Ontario. There are four (4) actions required by the letter. Action 1 requires a response from Uranium One by July 9, 2012. Accordingly, this correspondence includes Uranium One's response to Action 1.

#### **NRC Required Action 1**

*By July 9, 2012 determine whether any other yellowcake drums previously shipped or awaiting shipment from your Wyoming facilities remain unopened. For any unopened drums identified, propose your course of action to ensure the safety of these drums for continued storage, shipment, or further processing. Specifically, verify that the loaded drums at your facility are not exhibiting signs of pressurization, or if any drums are, then take the appropriate actions to mitigate the condition. Regarding the drums shipped to the Canadian facility, communicate recommendations to the uranium refinery to mitigate the potential for worker exposure due to potentially pressurized drums.*

#### **Uranium One Response**

As of today's date (July 9, 2012) Uranium One USA, Inc. has 449 un-opened drums of yellowcake from our Willow Creek facility that are located at Cameco's Blind River facility. These drums consist of Lots Willow Creek 2 through 9. The Blind River facility opened and

Uranium One USA, Inc.  
tel +1 307-234-8235 • fax +1 307-237-8235  
907 N. Poplar Street  
Suite 260 • Casper  
Wyoming • 82601  
[www.uranium1.com](http://www.uranium1.com)



sampled Willow Creek Lot 1 (48 drums) and the first two drums of Lot 7, prior to the incident with Drum 3 of Lot 7. Cameco's Blind River facility has segregated all of the un-opened Willow Creek drums and has placed them in a separate holding area within their facility.

It should be noted that Uranium One personnel inspected all drums prior to shipment to the Blind River facility, and no drums were observed to exhibit any obvious signs of pressurization.

To date, there are 169 un-opened drums of yellowcake located at the Willow Creek Project, Irigaray Central Processing Plant. These consist of Lots Willow Creek 10, 11 and part of 12. All of these drums have been inspected for pressurization. It was determined that thirteen (13) drums out of the 169 drums exhibited minor pressurization. Nine (9) drums that showed signs of pressurization were de-pressurized by drilling a 1/8 inch diameter hole in the drum lid. Of these nine (9) drums, seven (7) drums showed minor pressurization, and certainly not at a level that could have caused the drum incident at Blind River. Two (2) drums showed no pressure at all. Six (6) drums that appeared to show very minor pressurization have been segregated for further investigation purposes and therefore have not yet been confirmed to be pressurized by drilling a hole in the drum lid.

Uranium One and Cameco have had discussions regarding the handling of potentially pressurized drums. Cameco has stated they will prepare a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) of how to safely de-pressurize drums exhibiting signs of pressurization. As discussed with Cameco representatives, Uranium One will share the results of our investigation with Cameco, which may help with that analysis. The JHA will include recommendations for mitigating the potential for worker exposure. Cameco has indicated that pressurized drums can be de-pressurized by drilling a small hole in the drum lid to relieve pressure.

If you should have any questions, please contact me at (307) 234-8235 ext. 333 or by email, at [donna.wichers@uranium1.com](mailto:donna.wichers@uranium1.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donna L. Wichers", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Donna L. Wichers

President

Uranium One USA, Inc

cc: Blair Spitzberg, Linda Gersey, Robert Evans- NRC Region IV  
Ron Linton- NRC Headquarters

Uranium One USA, Inc.  
tel +1 307-234-8235 • fax +1 307-237-8235  
907 N. Poplar Street  
Suite 260 • Casper  
Wyoming • 82601  
[www.uranium1.com](http://www.uranium1.com)



Mr. Carl Anderson, Administrator  
Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality  
Solid and Hazardous Waste Division  
122 West 25th Street  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

Ms. Nancy Nuttbrock, Administrator  
Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality  
Land Quality Division  
1122 West 25th Street  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

Uranium One USA, Inc.  
tel +1 307-234-8235 • fax +1 307-237-8235  
907 N. Poplar Street  
Suite 260 • Casper  
Wyoming • 82601  
[www.uranium1.com](http://www.uranium1.com)