



PDR

WASTE WM-34

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

4210 EAST 11th AVENUE · DENVER, COLORADO 80220 · PHONE 320-8333

POOR ORIGINAL

December 6, 1979

Ross Scarano
Uranium Recovery Licensing Section
Mail Stop 483-SS
Division of Waste Management
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555



Dear Ross:

Your letter of November 16, 1979 concerning tailings impoundment stability at the Union Carbide Corporation's Uravan, Colorado, uranium mill site, recommends "an independent, detailed, safety evaluation on dam stability to determine the adequacy of Phase I and Phase II work in providing a reasonable margin of safety for the remaining years of operation" of the Uravan mill and tailings ponds.

The Department has requested, through Agreement State programs (letter of December 4, 1979), that the consultants, Geotechnical Engineers, Inc., who visited the site October 30, 1979 with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the State's representative, begin such a safety evaluation immediately.

Please provide a statement of the scope of the evaluation and approximate timetable. The Department is most concerned to receive an independent technical evaluation of the degree of imminent health hazard or whether actions can be taken which will enable continued operation of the tailings disposal system. Will field work such as additional drilling be involved? Will recommendations concerning the toe berms, toe drains, and additional monitoring be forthcoming? Will the path and consequences of serious failures be evaluated? Will seismic and long-term stability be independently analyzed at this time?

90012314

8001100345

8001100345

FEE EXEMPT

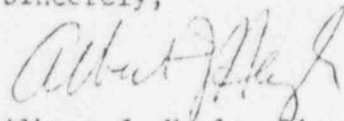
Info only
14573

DEC 11 1979

Ross Scarano
December 6, 1979
page two

The Department has acted upon or is considering other recommendations in the November 16, 1979 letter. Thank you for your continuing assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,



Albert J. Hazle, Director
Radiation and Hazardous Wastes
Control Division

AJH:KLKW:ew

cc: Wayne Kerr, NRC
Roy Person, NRC
R.G. Beverly, Union Carbide
G. Schierman, Union Carbide
R. Jones, Union Carbide

90012315

14373