

FEB 16 1977

Ref: SA/ER

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dudley Thompson, Acting Director  
Division of Field Operations, IE

Lee Rouse, Chief  
Fuel Processing and Fabricating Branch, OMPSS

FROM: G. Wayne Kerr, Assistant Director  
for State Agreements Program  
Office of State Programs

SUBJECT: ORDER ISSUED BY NEW MEXICO TO THE UNITED NUCLEAR-  
HOMESTAKE PARTNERS CORPORATION, NEW MEXICO  
LICENSE NO. SUA-708

Attached for your information is a copy of the subject Order issued on February 11, 1977 and a copy of a map showing the flow path of the released materials. Although the company's fence around the property is not shown, all released material is within the company's fenced property and the nearest approach of the material to an offsite area is about 1/8 mile.

We understand that the State will issue a followup Order requiring cessation of operations if the licensee fails to meet his commitments and the conditions of the Order. A State inspector remains onsite to monitor the licensee's daily progress.

Original Signed by  
G. Wayne Kerr

G. Wayne Kerr, Assistant Director  
for State Agreements Program  
Office of State Programs

8104230732



WAYNE KERR 27767

# STATE OF NEW MEXICO

PHONE: (505) 827-5271, Ext. 201

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT AGENCY  
P. O. BOX 2348, SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87501

HEALTH-  
SOCIAL  
SERVICES

## ORDER


Pursuant to the New Mexico Environmental Improvement Board's Regulations for Governing the Health and Environmental Aspects of Radiation, No. 3-400(3), the following additional requirements and conditions are hereby incorporated in the license for uranium mill operations conducted under former U.S. Atomic Energy Commission Source Material License No. SUA-708, under administrative control of this agency since May 1, 1974.

1. The company shall cease discharge of slurry into the east portion of tailings pile until further approval by this agency.
2. Intentional drainage of radioactive liquids from the eroded dike area shall be into the west pond; as soon as possible, or some other confined area.
3. The company shall submit to the agency by February 22, 1977 an outline of its plans and time scales for early recovery of the liquid slimes and sands spilled. This operation must be accomplished as soon as practicable.
4. The company shall submit to the agency by March 1, 1977 an outline of its plans and time scales for repair of the tailings dam break. A stability analysis of the structure when completed shall be submitted within 90 days.
5. The company shall submit to the agency by April 10, 1977 a report of the clean-up operations conducted by it, including a sampling program for surrounding wells under the company's control and plans for any additional appropriate clean-up or monitoring.
6. The company shall submit to the agency as part of its license renewal application emergency control measures in case of a similar break on each side of the tailings pile.

7. The company may discharge tailings into the west end of tailings pond pursuant to the conditions submitted by the company and attached hereto.

8. If any spillage or other indications of structural weakness of the west pond are observed or if the provisions of the attachment are not met, then the company will cease discharge pursuant to normal (non-emergency) procedures to the west end of the tailings pond upon the agency's request. Upon ceasing of discharge pursuant to this paragraph, the agency and the company shall meet and attempt to resolve the difficulties which resulted in the agency's request to cease discharge. The company shall not be required to cease discharge for a period of more than ten (10) days pursuant to this paragraph.

9. If the information submitted by the company is found inadequate by the agency, the parties shall meet as quickly as possible to attempt to resolve any dispute, and any required information shall be submitted within a reasonable time.

  
THOMAS E. BACA, Director  
New Mexico Environmental  
Improvement Agency

DATED at Santa Fe, New Mexico, this 11th day of February, 1977.

Box 2348 - Radiation Protection Division  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

CITY

S.O. NO. 3643

*Futa* *n.m.*  
**REPORT OF ANALYSIS**

DETERMINATION of GROSS ALPHA,  
TYPE OF ANALYSIS BETA, RADIUM-226 & TOTAL  
URANIUM in WATER SAMPLES

64-135

CUSTOMER ORDER NUMBER

SAMPLES RECEIVED 01-16-76

400 = 4.57  
30 = 3.58

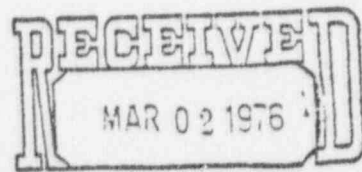
5.05  
2.10

Sample Identification	Sample Number	Total Volume (l)	pCi/liter Alpha	Beta	Pa-226	ngU/l Total U
UNHP IX	1	3.6	760 ± 64	240 ± 13	74.0 ± 0.4	OK 100 3.5
UNHP IX Property Line	2	3.8	1110 ± 70	393 ± 16	82.2 ± 0.3	OK 980 3.5
UNHP Well D	3	3.8	534 ± 54	630 ± 21	OK 0.32 ± 0.03	OK 5000 1.7
UNHP Tailings Decant	4	3.8	1370 ± 90	1500 ± 30	OK 14.7 ± 0.1	OK 8000 2.6
K. M. BaCl <sub>2</sub> Influent	5	3.5	1270 ± 80	529 ± 19	OK 63.4 ± 0.3	OK 1850 4.2
K. M. BaCl <sub>2</sub> Effluent	6	3.6	1150 ± 80	427 ± 17	OK 5.66 ± 0.10	OK 1800 6.1

*For Ernest*

*HR C*

*Rev. 10/1*



OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND  
RADIATION DIVISION

☐ REPORTED VIA TELEPHONE

☐ REPORTED VIA TWX

PAGE 1 OF 1 PAGE



**EBERLINE INSTRUMENT  
CORPORATION**

P.O. BOX 3874 ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87110  
PHONE (505) 345-3461 TWX: 910-195-0678

APPROVED BY

*Kathy Burnham*  
Kathy Burnham, Environmental Reports  
Albuquerque Laboratory

03-01-76

DATE

29



February 8, 1977

NOTICE OF NON-ROUTINE EVENT INVOLVING AGREEMENT STATE OR  
AGREEMENT MATERIALS--77-02

This NOTICE constitutes an early report of events occurring in an Agreement State of possible safety or public interest significance. The information presented is as initially received without verification or evaluation and is basically all that is known by State Agreements Program staff as of 12:00 noon on date of this notification. IT SHOULD BE SPECIFICALLY NOTED THAT THIS NOTICE MAY CONTAIN INFORMATION THAT LATER MAY BE DETERMINED TO BE INACCURATE OR INCONSISTENT.

AGREEMENT STATE: New Mexico

FACILITY: United Nuclear-Honestake Partners Uranium Mill

SUBJECT: Broken Uranium Mill Tailings Dam

Personnel of the State Agreements Program, OSP, were notified by NMSS on February 8, 1977 of a report of a break in a uranium mill tailings dam in New Mexico. State officials confirmed the report. The break began on Saturday, February 5, 1977 when the tailings slurry pipe from the plant to the tailings pile broke and the effluent began to erode the dam. The licensee notified the State of the break on February 5. The breach expanded and eventually became 150 feet across by 70' deep. The entire tailings pond drained and spilled into vacant land covering an estimated 25 to 50 acres several inches deep. The spillage is entirely confined to property controlled by the licensee. The State sent investigators to the site. An article appeared in the Albuquerque Journal on February 8, 1977. The mill is currently shut down and the State is developing plans for approving restoration of the dam, reclamation of the spillage, and to assess long-term impact of the spillage (such as to ground water). There was no threat to the public health and safety as a direct result of the spillage.

Contact: G. Wayne Farr, 492-7767; J. O. Lubenau, 492-7767

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814200503

February 14, 1977

NOTICE OF NON-ROUTINE EVENT INVOLVING AGREEMENT STATE OR  
AGREEMENT MATERIALS-77-02A

This NOTICE constitutes an early report of events occurring in an Agreement State of possible safety or public interest significance. The information presented is as initially received without verification or evaluation and is basically all that is known by State Agreements Program staff as of 12:00 noon on date of this notification. IT SHOULD BE SPECIFICALLY NOTED THAT THIS NOTICE MAY CONTAIN INFORMATION THAT LATER MAY BE DETERMINED TO BE INACCURATE OR INCONSISTENT.

AGREEMENT STATE: New Mexico

FACILITY: United Nuclear-Homestake Partners Uranium Mill

SUBJECT: Broken Uranium Mill Tailings Dam

This is an update of Notice of Non-Routine Event 77-02 dated February 8, 1977.

On February 11, 1977 the State of New Mexico issued an order to the subject licensee prohibiting discharge of slurry to that portion of the tailings pond where the dam break occurred (East portion), requiring the licensee to submit plans for recovery of slimes and sludge, plans for repair of the tailings dam break, emergency plans for coping with possible future breaks, submission of a stability analysis of the tailings dam and submission of a report on clean up activities. The closest approach of released material to an off-site area was about 1/8 mile.

The order allowed the licensee to resume activities on February 12, 1977, utilizing the West portion of the tailings pond with additional restrictions on the type of couplings on the slurry line, installation of a pressure alarm in the slurry line, improved lighting of the area, increased personnel surveillance of the tailings area and a limit on the liquid level in the West tailings pond. The West portion is physically separated from the East pond.

The adequacy of the licensee's proposal for resuming operations was evaluated by technical staff of the New Mexico Environmental Improvement Agency and the State Engineers Office. A State employee will be on the site each day to monitor the progress of the licensee's actions.

The State has advised other uranium mill licensees of this occurrence and requested submission of new plans for coping with similar emergencies. The staff has been in daily contact with State officials and has kept IE and NMSS informed. Other Agreement States with active uranium mills have been informed of the occurrence.

We plan to meet with the State to review this event in mid March.

Contact: G. Wayne Kerr, 492-7767; E. P. Resner - 492-7767

Distribution on Page 2					
SURNAME					
DATE					

dup of 8100200511

NON-ROUTINE EVENT 77-02A

February 14, 1977

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Non-Routine Event File (Orig & 1 carbon)

New Mexico file (yellow)

SA R/F

SA S. S. B.