

February 14, 1997

U.S. Department of Health and
Human Services
Public Health Service
National Institute of Environmental
Health Sciences
ATTN: Philip E. Hamrick, Ph.D.
Radiation Safety Officer
P. O. Box 12233
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT NO. 32-12358-01/97-01

Dear Dr. Hamrick:

During the week of January 14-17, 1997, the NRC completed an inspection at the National Institute of Environmental Health Science (NIEHS) North Campus facilities at 104 T.W. Alexander Drive. The enclosed report presents the results of that inspection, which were discussed with you and members of your staff on January 17, 1997, following the inspection.

During the inspection, records were reviewed, procedures were discussed with personnel, and direct confirmatory measurements were obtained in and around Buildings 4, 5, 6, 7, 9A, and 10 at the formerly utilized North Campus facilities at 104 T.W. Alexander Drive, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. Based on those reviews, discussions and measurements, no violations were identified. However, the inspectors did determine that based upon the information provided in your November 14, 1996, report and the results of our survey, additional information, surveys and/or remediation of the facilities are required before we can conclude that the facilities are suitable for release for unrestricted use. Specifically, the survey instrument (plastic scintillation probe) and procedures you used were not adequate to demonstrate that the facilities comply with the contamination limits that apply to these facilities (5000 dpm/100 cm² average and 15000 dpm/100 cm² maximum).

In a telephone conference on February 6, 1996, Mr. Jay Henson and I informed you of the additional actions necessary to demonstrate that the North Campus facilities are suitable for release for unrestricted use. These actions include:

1. Performance of a scanning survey of 100 percent of all surfaces (floors, countertops, hoods, cabinets, walls up to 2 meters, etc.) in all affected areas with instrumentation and procedures adequate to detect levels of contamination well below the maximum limit (<50% of limit) and preferably at or below the average limit. Refer to Section 5.2, page 5.8 in NUREG/CR-5849, Manual for Conducting Radiological Surveys in Support of License Termination, for a method of estimating the minimum detectable activity for a survey instrument used for scanning surveys.

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2. Performance of a direct measurement (e.g., one minute scaler count) of areas with elevated direct radiation detected during the scanning survey. These elevated areas will be evaluated for compliance with the average and maximum contamination limits. These elevated areas will also be evaluated to determine the level of removable contamination.
3. Assess the level of contamination present in all sink traps located in affected areas. This may be determined by siphoning of a liquid sample from each trap and counting this sample in an appropriate laboratory instrument, or removal of the liquid from each trap and smearing its interior surface for removable contamination as appropriate.

Before release of these facilities is authorized, you must remediate any areas of contamination above the limits identified during this survey and submit an additional survey report based upon the above described actions which demonstrates that the areas meet the unrestricted release criteria. However, you may submit some alternative means of demonstrating that any or all of the North Campus facilities are suitable for release for unrestricted use for our review based upon your current final survey results and some additional justification that supports the release (e.g., alternative release criteria, dose assessment based upon material possession limits, facility disposition, etc.). Any proposed alternatives would be submitted to the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Division of Waste Management for approval.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

Should you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact us.

Sincerely,

(original signed by
J. P. Potter)

John P. Potter, Chief
Materials Licensing/Inspection Branch 2
Division of Nuclear Materials Safety



Docket No.: 030-05596
License No.: 32-12358-01

Enclosure: NRC Inspection Report
No. 32-12358-01/97-01

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