



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

June 5, 1997

Mr. Dwight A. Shearer, Health Physicist
Pennsylvania Department of
Environmental Protection
Southwest Regional Office
400 Waterfront Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-4745

SUBJECT: APPLICATION OF UNRESTRICTED RELEASE CRITERIA TO CONTAMINATED SEWER
SLUDGE ASH AT THE KISKI VALLEY WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY
SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT

Dear Mr. Shearer:

I am responding to your letter of May 8, 1997, to Dr. Robert Neal of my staff which summarized your views on positions, solutions, and possible alternatives for addressing the radiologically contaminated sewer sludge ash at the Kiski Valley Water Pollution Control Authority (KVVWPCA) Sewage Treatment Plant. You are correct that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is concerned about the proper disposal of the sludge ash stored in a lagoon on the KVVWPCA site.

You state in your letter that the first hurdle to implementation of your alternative solutions to the sludge ash problem is for NRC to stipulate, in writing, that any KVVWPCA sludge ash with less than 30 pCi/gram of enriched uranium can be released for "unrestricted use". The sewer sludge ash contaminated with enriched uranium below 30 pCi/gram is suitable for release for unrestricted use in accordance with the NRC's Site Decommissioning Action Plan, dated April 16, 1992, and Fuel Cycle Policy and Guidance Directive FC 83-23, "Guidelines for Decontamination of Facilities and Equipment Prior to Release for Unrestricted Use and Termination of Byproduct, Source, and Special Nuclear Material Licenses," dated November 14, 1983. This criteria applies regardless of whether the material will be left on site or disposed off site. However, we want to review the plan for the removal of this material, and the plan for the disposition of any remaining material containing higher levels of radioactive contamination before any removal operations begin.

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D. Shearer

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If you have any questions concerning this response, please feel free to contact me at (301) 415-6696, or Mr. Nelson at (301) 415-7298.

Sincerely,

/s/

John W. N. Hickey, Chief
Low-Level Waste and Decommissioning
Projects Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

cc: W. Kirk, PADEP
M. Forbeck, PADEP
R. Kosack, KVVPCA

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