



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

April 29, 1997

Mr. Dwight Sharer
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental
Protection
400 Waterfront Drive
Pittsburgh, PA

SUBJECT: CONTAMINATED SEWER SLUDGE ASH AT THE KISKI VALLEY WATER POLLUTION
CONTROL AUTHORITY SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT

Dear Mr. Sharer:

I am the Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff member that has been designated as the new project manager for matters relating to the disposition of radiologically contaminated sewer sludge ash at the Kiski Valley Water Pollution Control Authority (KVVWPCA) sewage treatment plant. The purpose of my letter is to request your assistance in obtaining additional information that is required to complete our assessment of disposal alternatives for this contaminated material.

In previous meetings with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP), we have discussed several disposal alternatives and we prepared a preliminary dose assessment for these alternatives. A copy of this assessment, which was previously provided to PADEP, is enclosed for reference.

On December 11, 1996, PADEP and NRC staff met with representatives of KVVWPCA to discuss disposal alternatives. For the onsite disposal alternative, both PADEP and NRC agreed to review the KVVWPCA "Closure Plan for Incinerator Ash," dated July 1994, which was prepared by M. M. Washko and W. F. Heintz, and presented to PADEP by Chester Environmental of Pittsburgh, PA. In addition, we provided a copy of NRC's guidance document NUREG-1101, "Onsite Disposal of Radioactive Waste." In a telephone conversation with Mike Forbeck, Section Chief, Land Recycle/Waste Management, PADEP SW, and Jody Rosenberg, Attorney, PADEP SW, on December 16, 1997, we stated that this closure plan did not include sufficient hydrogeochemical and engineering information for us to prepare a dose assessment to evaluate the public health and safety. The additional information needed by NRC to complete our assessment of the onsite disposal alternative is contained in Section 3.7.1 (items 1 through 10) of Volume 1 of NUREG-1101. A copy of this NUREG was mailed to you on March 3, 1997. Your assistance in obtaining this information is requested.

In addition, our draft assessment indicated that disposal of the ash in a municipal solid waste landfill may be technically feasible. The additional information needed to complete the assessment of this alternative was identified in a letter to Mr. William Kirk, Bureau of Radiation Protection, PADEP, dated October 4, 1996. A copy of this letter is also enclosed. Your assistance in obtaining this information is also requested.

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D. Sharer

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Finally, I understand that you're assessing an alternative of interim storage onsite followed by incremental disposal of the waste in a licensed low-level radioactive waste disposal facility. To evaluate this alternative, we would need site information similar to that for onsite disposal, a detailed description of the interim storage facility, and a description of the process for incremental removal of the waste from storage for disposal.

Following receipt of the information identified above, we estimate that we can complete the assessment in approximately three months

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (301) 415-6696 or by internet at RBN@NRC.GOV.

Sincerely,

[Original signed by]

Robert B. Neel, Health Physicist
Low-Level Waste and Regulatory
Issues Section
Low-Level Waste and Decommissioning
Projects Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosures:

1. Draft Dose Assessment
2. Letter from M. Weber, USNRC,
to W. Kirk, PADEP, dated
October 4, 1996

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

TICKET: N/A

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