

DEC 26 1973

Ms. Huguette Thomson
4130 N. W. 48th St.
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dear Ms. Thomson:

Thank you for your letter of October 14, 1973 regarding the Kerr-McGee Plutonium Fuel Plant. We appreciate your interest in this matter and hope the following information will be useful to you.

The Kerr-McGee Plutonium Fuel Plant was constructed in 1969 at the site of the firm's existing Uranium Fuel Plant near Crescent, Oklahoma. After careful review of the plant design and proposed methods of operation, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) issued a license to Kerr-McGee for operation of the plant in April of 1970. The license authorizes the receipt and use of plutonium and uranium, in accordance with specified license conditions, for the fabrication of mixed plutonium-uranium nuclear reactor fuel. The operations at the Kerr-McGee plant have no connection with the nation's nuclear weapons program. Plutonium is considered to be a valuable energy resource and the current plutonium fuel fabrication operations at the Kerr-McGee plant are a part of a program to develop a nuclear reactor that can best utilize this resource (technically referred to as the "breeder reactor program").

As you have indicated, the nature of plutonium demands great care and confinement for safe handling. This was recognized at the time of its discovery and most of the technology for working safely with plutonium has come out of the weapons programs referred to above. Over almost thirty years, tons of plutonium have been produced and handled at AEC facilities with only minor releases to the environs resulting in insignificant exposure to the public. With smaller quantities, experience over the past 10-12 years in commercial facilities conducting operations similar to those of Kerr-McGee also provides evidence that the required confinement of plutonium can and has been achieved.

OFFICE ▶

SURNAME ▶

DATE ▶

8512170137 731226
PDR ADOCK 04008027
C PDR

Ms. Huguette Thomson

- 2 -

As already noted above, the Kerr-McGee Plutonium Fuel Plant is licensed by the AEC. With respect to compliance with this license and its conditions, the Plutonium Fuel Plant is subject, at all times, to inspection and surveillance by the Commission's Directorate of Regulatory Operations. Documents relating to licensing actions and inspections of the Kerr-McGee plant are maintained for public review at the library in Guthrie, Oklahoma.

The AEC Regulatory staff is preparing a draft environmental impact statement on the Kerr-McGee Plutonium Fuel Plant as required by the Commission's regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). When the draft environmental statement is completed, copies will be sent to Federal and Oklahoma State agencies for review and comment. A copy will be placed in the public record maintained at the Guthrie, Oklahoma library and the public will be advised of the availability of the statement by a notice published in the FEDERAL REGISTER inviting comments. In view of your interest in this matter, a copy of the statement will be forwarded directly to you.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by
Leland C. Rouse

D. A. Nussbaumer
Assistant Director for Fuel Cycle
Directorate of Licensing

Distribution:

SHSmiley

DANussbaumer

OGC

LCRouse

RBChitwood

MMGroff - L#338

L R/F

L:FM R/F

L:FFRB R/F

Subject File

SC # 3 10/24/73

See previous yellow for concurrences

OFFICE ▶	L:FFRB	L:TS	OGC	L:FC	L:FM	L:FM
SURNAME ▶	LCRouse:pw	RBChitwood	JRMapes	DANussbaumer	RECunningham	SHSmiley
DATE ▶	12/6/73	12/11/73	12/10/73	12/14/73	12/20/73	12/ /73