

June 17, 1997

Mr. Joseph E. Virgona
U.S. Department of Energy
Grand Junction Project Office
P.O. Box 2567
2597 B 3/4 Road
Grand Junction, Co 81502

Dear Joe:

You mentioned to me some time ago that you were thinking of retiring. However, I did not realize how close the time had gotten to your retirement until you announced at the recent Nuclear Regulatory Commission/National Mining Association workshop that you would not be around for the next workshop in June 1998. Realizing how eminent your retirement is, I wanted to take the opportunity to let you know what a pleasure it has been to work with you over the past several years.

When you and I entered our working relationship, I representing NRC and you the Department of Energy, I believe we were both somewhat concerned about how the two agencies would interact. Fortunately, we were able to develop a good relationship, that has benefited not only our agencies, but also the U.S. citizens that we serve. Over the course of our years of interaction, I must tell you that I have truly enjoyed working with you. Not only were we able to cultivate a good personal relationship, but your efforts have helped strengthen the relationship between DOE and NRC.

In addition, I believe you personally as a Federal employee have demonstrated a dedication that is a positive reflection on not only you but also the United States Government. The American public can take pride in having Federal employees with your unwavering devotion serving them. Your knowledge and understanding of uranium recovery and DOE were a tremendous help in developing a sound program for long-term care of uranium mill tailings sites. I have found you to be an unselfish individual who conscientiously performed his job. You can be proud of your accomplishments in the uranium recovery program, and I assure you, once you retire, your absence will be felt.

In closing, I want you to know that it was always a pleasure to work with you, and I wish you the best of luck in the future.

Sincerely,

(Original signed by)

Joseph J. Holonich, Chief
Uranium Recovery Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

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