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**NRC INSPECTION FINDS APPARENT VIOLATION OF FEDERAL
REGULATION; AGENCY REQUIRES FURTHER INFORMATION**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a report on a special inspection and investigation of Envirocare of Utah, which operates a radioactive waste disposal facility near Clive, Utah.

The inspection, conducted last October, determined that Envirocare apparently violated NRC regulations by possessing special nuclear material in quantities in excess of Federal limits between May and September 1997. A subsequent investigation, concluded in February, has raised a concern that this apparent violation may involve careless disregard for the NRC's regulatory requirements.

In his letter transmitting the report to Envirocare, NRC Regional Administrator Ellis W. Merschoff has directed that the company provide information concerning the reasons for the apparent violation (including the issue of careless disregard); corrective steps that have been taken and results achieved; measures taken to avoid further violations; and the date when full compliance with NRC requirements will be achieved. Mr. Merschoff said NRC is postponing a decision on enforcement action until current enforcement proceedings between Envirocare and the State of Utah on the same issue are concluded.

Special nuclear material is defined as certain isotopes of uranium and plutonium that, in sufficient quantity and geometry, could result in a nuclear fission chain reaction. However, there was never any possibility that such a chain reaction could have occurred at Envirocare because the special nuclear material was dispersed through many tons of contaminated soil and other wastes received from various sources.

The company has 30 days to comply with the demand for information.

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EDITORS: The text of the letter is attached. Both the letter and the text of the inspection report will be posted on the Internet at www.nrc.gov/OPA/reports.