

September 13, 2000

The Honorable Rick Santorum
United States Senator
Suite 250, Landmarks Building
One Station Square
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Senator Santorum:

I am responding to your letter of August 14, 2000, which enclosed information from your constituent, Washington County Commissioner Diana L. Irey, concerning decommissioning activities at the Molycorp, Inc., Washington, PA (Canton Township), facility. Commissioner Irey forwarded information from concerned citizens of Canton Township.

Commissioner Irey expressed concerns in two areas: (1) Molycorp's proposal to permanently contain and store radioactive waste at its Canton Township site; and (2) Molycorp's proposal to import similar material from its Reading, PA, site and store the material at its Canton Township site. To clarify the concern, the second Molycorp site is located outside of York, not Reading, PA.

Regarding the first concern, our review of the proposed decommissioning of the Molycorp, Washington, site, has been divided into two phases. The first phase of the review focused on Molycorp's proposal, submitted on June 30, 1999, to clean up the contaminated portion of the site to meet our criteria for unrestricted release. We approved this plan, with modifications, on August 8, 2000. The second phase of the review focuses on Molycorp's proposal to construct a permanent disposal cell at the Washington site and dispose of radioactive waste, resulting from the first phase in this cell. Molycorp submitted this proposal in the form of a Phase 2 Decommissioning Plan (DP) on July 14, 2000. This submittal included the report of the Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB), a portion of which was included in Commissioner Irey's letter to you. We accepted the DP for detailed technical review on August 16, 2000. Our review will consider all comments we receive, including those of Commissioner Irey and the SSAB. In addition, we plan to hold several public meetings in the vicinity of the Washington facility to: discuss the DP; explain our review process; and solicit public comments. The first of these meetings is currently being planned and when scheduled will be noticed on the internet at www.nrc.gov/opa/public/meet.html.

Regarding the second concern, on August 1, 2000, Molycorp withdrew its proposal to store waste from its York site at the Washington site. As a result, we are no longer considering this proposal. Molycorp plans to dispose of this waste at a commercial facility in Texas.

Senator R. Santorum

-2-

To ensure that State concerns are addressed in our reviews, we have worked closely with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Environmental Protection, and we will continue to do so in our review of the Phase 2 DP.

I trust that this letter responds to your concerns.

Sincerely,

/RA/

William D. Travers
Executive Director
for Operations

Docket No.: SMB-1393
License No.: 040-08778

cc: Molycorp, Washington Dist.List

Senator R. Santorum

-2-

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