



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION I
475 ALLENDALE ROAD
KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19406-1415

September 11, 2001

Evelyn Morrison
138 South 8th Street
Reading, PA 19602

SUBJECT: CONCERNS YOU RAISED ABOUT THE CABOT READING SITE

Dear Ms. Morrison:

This is in response to your telephone call to the National Response Center on August 11, 2001, and to Mr. Theodore Smith of our Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards on August 24, 2001 regarding radioactive material stored at the Cabot site in Reading, Pennsylvania, and a 1993 report entitled "Confirmatory Radiological Survey for Portions of the Cabot Corporation". Based on your conversations with Theodore Smith, the NRC Project Manager, it is my understanding that you have a copy of the above report.

The Cabot site in Reading, Pennsylvania, has been on the NRC's Site Decommissioning Management Plan (SDMP) list of sites which involve special attention by the NRC staff and management. This site was placed on the SDMP list in 1990 due to the contaminated waste located on the side of an embankment at the rear area of the site. The waste was generated from ore processing operations conducted in the late 1960s and contains contaminated sand from Baltimore, Maryland. The embankment contains approximately 546 m³ (19,281 ft³) of slag consisting mostly of large chunks of slag, a black, glass-like material with very low solubility. The site is surrounded by a fence and the licensee regularly conducts quarterly surveys.

All the SDMP sites, including the Cabot Reading site, require either remediation or some regulatory issues that must be addressed before the sites can be released for unrestricted use and the license terminated. The licensee has submitted a decommissioning plan to the NRC for review and approval. In that plan, Cabot proposes to leave the material in place, without remediation, under criteria contained in the License Termination Rule. NRC's review of that plan will assure that the License Termination Rule criteria are met. In addition, we continue to regularly inspect this site to ensure that the appropriate regulations are adhered to and the safety of the public and the environment are maintained. You may review the findings of NRC inspections available in the Public Document Room or in our electronic document control system (ADAMS).

During the latest NRC inspection completed in July 2001, one violation of NRC requirements was identified pertaining to improper posting of the site as a radioactive materials area. The licensee, Cabot Corporation, has responded to this violation, and provided adequate corrective action. We are not aware of any other outstanding regulatory issues such as your questions with respect to elevated radiation levels. Our inspectors will continue to monitor the licensee's activities.

E. Morrison

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If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Project Manager, Mr. Theodore Smith, at 301-415-6721 or Anthony Dimitriadis of my staff at 610-337-6953. Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

Original signed by George Pangburn

George Pangburn, Director
Division of Nuclear Materials Safety

cc:
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

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