

March 14, 2002

The Honorable Roscoe G. Bartlett
Member, United States
House of Representatives
5831 Buckeystown Pike, Suite E
Frederick, Maryland 21704

Dear Congressman Bartlett:

In your letter dated January 15, 2002, you asked that the Environmental Protection Agency consider questions raised by Mr. Chris Weese of the Larox Corporation. This request was forwarded to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission by the Department of Energy on January 18, 2002. The NRC staff contacted Mr. Brian Wojcik of the Larox Corporation to better understand the questions contained in the e-mail that was attached to your letter. Mr. Wojcik indicated that he was interested in knowing whether or not there was a governmental or industry organization that conducted evaluations and certified or "pre-qualified" equipment. He noted that this would allow businesses such as Larox to manufacture products such as their pressure filtration units that would be "pre-qualified."

The NRC does not establish standards of the type described by Mr. Wojcik. The NRC establishes regulations that address the systems, structures and components (SSCs) associated with nuclear power facilities, as well as administrative or programmatic activities such as training and quality assurance programs. However, it is the responsibility of the NRC licensee to demonstrate that a particular SSC meets the requirements in the regulations.

The Technology Transfer Act encourages Federal agencies to work with professional organizations and use consensus codes and standards for manufacturing and performance specifications. There are a number of professional organizations that set product and process standards which the NRC endorses, for example, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME). In summary, ASME has developed a number of standards that cover specific equipment such as pumps, valves, and piping, as well as processes such as quality assurance programs that have been endorsed by the NRC. In response to the questions raised by Mr. Wojcik, the staff has reviewed the index of standards published by several professional societies to determine whether or not they have issued standards that would be specifically applicable to the pressure filtration units for chemical processing. None have been identified. However, the activities of the ASME Committee on Nuclear Air and Gas Treatment (CONAGT) and the related code AG-1 could provide insights into the pressure filtration processing equipment.

Congressman Bartlett

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The National Institute of Standards and Technology has the Federal lead for standards activities. Their web site (<http://www.ts.NIST.gov>) contains a large volume of information related to standards. Additional information concerning NRC's standards activities is available at our web site (<http://www.nrc.gov/what-we-do.html>).

If you have any questions concerning NRC standards activities, please contact Michael E. Mayfield, the NRC's Standards Executive at 301-415-5678.

Sincerely,

/RA/

William D. Travers
Executive Director
for Operations

cc: Chris Weese, Larox
Brian Wojcik, Larox
Brenda Mackall, DOE

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