



50-280/281
50-338/339

COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Health

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July 10, 2002

Kathy Halvey Gibson, Chief
Emergency Preparedness and Health Physics Section
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Ms. Gibson:

This is in response to a letter from Richard A. Meserve, Chairman, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), offering to supply potassium iodide for the general public within a 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) around nuclear power plants. The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) strongly supports this initiative. VDH has reviewed scientific literature regarding the prophylactic use of potassium iodide in the event of a nuclear power plant accident and has also evaluated the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's guidance and recommended dosages for various age groups. VDH concurs with NRC that potassium iodide is a reasonable and prudent supplement to evacuation and sheltering, and also concludes that its administration to the general public within a few hours of accidental release of radioactive iodine from nuclear power plants would minimize the risk of thyroid cancer.

In accepting the offer by NRC, I hereby request 660,000 tablets of potassium iodide to provide two doses for each of the 330,000 individuals who live, work, or visit the 10-mile EPZ of the two nuclear power plants located in Surry County and Louisa County, Virginia. Included in this number is an estimate of the peak daytime population of the Williamsburg area tourist attractions and theme parks.

I am authorizing Khizar Wasti, Ph.D., on my staff to receive the supply of potassium iodide. Please ship the supply to the following address:

Khizar Wasti, Ph.D., Director
Division of Health Hazards Control
Virginia Department of Health
1500 East Main Street, Room 124
Richmond, Virginia 23218

A045 - Public

Add: Kathy Gibson

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According to the current Commonwealth of Virginia Radiological Emergency Response Plan (COVRERP), VDH distributes potassium iodide to only emergency workers when the situation warrants. After receiving the supply from NRC, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and VDH, in coordination with local governments, will revise the COVRERP to incorporate the distribution of potassium iodide to the general public.

Cooperation, coordination, and integration of resources among federal and state agencies are indispensable features in working towards our common goal of protecting the public's health from emergency incidences. Once again, I appreciate the initiative by NRC to supply potassium iodide to states. Should you have any questions, please contact Dr. Khizar Wasti at (804) 786-1763.

Sincerely,



Robert B. Stroube, M.D., M.P.H.
State Health Commissioner

cc: The Honorable Jane H. Woods
Secretary of Health and Human Resources

William H. Leighty
Chief of Staff
Office of the Governor

Barry R. Green
Deputy Secretary of Public Safety