

Mr. Dwight E. Shelor, Associate Director
for Systems and Compliance
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
U. S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D. C. 20585

Dear Mr. Shelor:

SUBJECT: ARCHIVING OF DRILL HOLE CORE

This is in response to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) letter dated March 5, 1993, which submitted, for U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff review, DOE's policy regarding the archiving of drill hole core. The NRC staff has reviewed the policy statement and procedures concerning DOE's handling of drill hole core and has not identified any concerns relating to the archiving of core.

Of particular concern to the NRC was the non-retention of a representative sample of core that was being tested for research purposes. In addressing that concern, DOE stated that for site characterization purposes, there are frequently multiple needs (engineering, geochemical, mineralogical, and others) to be met within the same lithologic unit, therefore it is not always possible to retain a representative sample of the interval being tested. In the case of missing intervals, a video tape and the lithologic log, coupled with the post testing core residue (if such exists) would be used as a substitute for the missing core. The DOE policy is to retrieve any core remnants from the participants and store them at the Sample Management Facility (SMF). The length of time this material will be stored at the SMF is not specified in the Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Project policy on archiving core. This policy was reaffirmed by the DOE on September 9, 1993. Therefore, the NRC staff assumes, unless informed otherwise by the DOE, that all drill hole core will be archived through permanent closure of the repository.

Based on its review of the DOE information, the staff finds the DOE practice for core archiving acceptable. If you have any comments or questions concerning this matter, please contact Paul Prestholt of my staff at (301) 510-3810.

Sincerely,

JS/

Joseph J. Holonich, Director
Repository Licensing and Quality
Assurance Directorate
Division of High-Level Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and
Safeguards

cc: See next page

*See previous concurrence

OFC	PPrestholt/dh	HLPD*	HLGE*	HLPB
NAME	PPrestholt/dh	CAbrams	RBallard	JHolonich
DATE	09/21/93	09/17/93	09/21/93	09/21/93

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Based on its review of the DOE information, the staff finds the DOE practice for core archiving acceptable. If you have any comments or questions concerning this matter, please contact Paul Prestholt of my staff at (301) 510-3810.

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cc: See next page

OFC	ENDD	E	HLPD	C	HLGE	E	HLPD	
NAME	PPrestholt/dh		CAbrams		RBa		JHolonich	
DATE	09/16/93		09/17/93		09/21/93		09/ /93	

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Mr. Dwight E. Shelor

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