

March 13, 1998

Mr. Daniel Mahoney
8 Arlington Street
Auburn, MA 01501-2638

SUBJECT: RADIOACTIVE NUCLEAR WASTE INFORMATION

Dear Mr. Mahoney:

This is in response to your recent request for information on nuclear radioactive waste management and related issues. Currently, regulatory responsibility for radioactive waste in the United States is shared by several entities and, as such, I thought it might be helpful to summarize the responsibilities of the agencies involved in the management of radioactive waste.

Under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission regulates the civilian uses of certain nuclear materials (called source, special nuclear, and by-product material) in the United States. NRC's mission is to protect public health and safety, the environment, and the common defense and security. NRC accomplishes this mission through: 1) licensing nuclear facilities and the possession, use and disposal of nuclear materials; 2) the development and implementation of guidance and requirements governing licensed activities; and 3) inspection and enforcement activities to ensure compliance with these requirements. Some States have entered into an agreement with the NRC to regulate source, special nuclear, and by-product material at non-Federal facilities within their borders, in lieu of NRC. These States are referred to as "Agreement States."

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) regulates the use and disposal of radioactive material at DOE sites and is responsible for siting, building, and operating a deep geologic repository for high-level waste. I have enclosed three brochures which discuss the management of radioactive waste in the United States, as well as additional information on NRC and its mission. Information on DOE's radiation programs may be obtained by contacting Mr. Lake Barrett, Acting Director, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585. I trust you will find this information useful.

Sincerely,

[J. Holonich for]
John T. Greeves, Director
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosures: As stated

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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John T. Greeves".

John T. Greeves, Director
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosures: As stated

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[J. Holonich for]
John T. Greeves, Director
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