

May 11, 2004

The Honorable Frank A. LoBiondo
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3002

Dear Congressman LoBiondo:

I am responding on behalf of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to your request for information about the Shieldalloy Metallurgical Corporation (SMC) site in Newfield, New Jersey, to allow you to respond to your constituent, Ms. Loretta Williams. Pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, the NRC is responsible for the regulation of source, special nuclear, and byproduct material including the uranium and thorium at the SMC site. Our mission to protect public health and safety, with respect to the use of these materials, includes ensuring that sites that use these materials are appropriately decommissioned at the conclusion of licensed activities. We have had several meetings and telephone conferences with SMC, and conduct routine inspections and site visits to ensure the safe decommissioning of the site. The NRC staff also continues to inform the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding NRC activities at this site.

On August 30, 2002, SMC submitted its Decommissioning Plan (DP) to the NRC. The NRC staff performed an initial review of the DP, and by letter dated February 28, 2003, rejected the DP because it did not contain sufficient information to continue a more detailed technical review. Since then, the NRC staff has been working to provide SMC with guidance for submitting a complete and high-quality DP.

Mr. Ken Kalman, the NRC Project Manager for the SMC site, has had several conversations with Ms. Williams. We are aware of her concerns regarding the site, especially her concern over the possibility of the radioactive isotope, Lead 210 (Pb-210), leaching into the groundwater. The NRC staff has also discussed this issue with staff at SMC, NJDEP, and EPA. The groundwater characterization that SMC conducted did not identify NRC-licensed radioisotopes above the EPA screening limit in the groundwater, except in the immediate vicinity of the slag pile. During an NRC inspection, which was conducted on April 7, 2004, groundwater samples were collected and analyzed for radioactive contaminants. Based on these analyses, we have determined there is no increase in radioactivity that is attributable to licensed radioisotopes at SMC. If offsite radiological data identifies concentration of licensable radioactive material above EPA screening levels we will evaluate this information and take the appropriate actions.

F. LoBiondo

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Please contact, Mr. Daniel Gillen, Deputy Director for the Decommissioning Directorate, Division of Waste Management and Environmental Protection, if you have any additional questions regarding the SMC site. He can be reached by telephone at 301-415-7295 or e-mail at dmg2@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA William F. Kane for/

William D. Travers
Executive Director
for Operations

F. LoBiondo

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