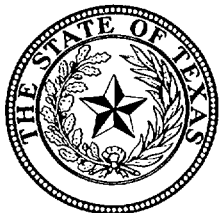


To: Lohaus, STP



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

EDUARDO J. SANCHEZ, M.D., M.P.H.
COMMISSIONER

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September 17, 2004

Mr. Martin J. Virgilio
Deputy Executive Director
for Materials Research and State Programs
Office of the Executive Director for
Operations
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
One White Flint North
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear Mr. Virgilio:

This letter is being provided to respond to your August 27, 2004 letter concerning the review of the Texas Department of State Health Services' radiation regulatory program. Let me clearly state, I believe that Texas' radiation regulatory program is one of the outstanding programs in the country and I support the Texas Agreement State Program.

In our new functional organizational model, the same expert staff in the same locations will continue to provide technical services as currently exist. The functional model will not decrease service; it consolidates some operational and administrative tasks so that technical staff can focus on serving the regulated community.

The Texas State Classification Office has recently recommended a new job classification of "health physicist". This recommendation will be acted upon in the next session of the Texas Legislature. If this new classification is approved and funded, we will be better able to recruit and retain the technical staff necessary to carry out this important program.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Richard Bays, Assistant Commissioner for Regulatory Services, at (512) 458-7338 or via e-mail at Richard.Bays@dshs.state.tx.us.

Sincerely,

Eduardo J. Sanchez, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

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