November 1, 1991 NMSS

(56)

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dennis K. Rathbun, Director
Congressional Affairs

FROM: Hugh L. Thompson, Jr.
Deputy Executive Director for
Nuclear Materials Safety, Safeguards,
and Operations Support

SUBJECT: SEQUOYAH FUELS

To help place the recently reported Sequoyah Fuels contamination of their administrative areas into perspective, the maximum exposure rate (on the carpet) reported from radioactive contamination is approximately 15 percent of the allowable hourly radiation levels as specified in the current 10 CFR Part 20 for an area that is occupied by a member of the public.

With regard to visitors to the administrative area, a more reasonable estimate of the maximum dose received in a two hour visit to this area should be based on the radiation levels as measured at 1 meter from the source of contamination. The estimated dose is less than 1 millirem or approximately 1 percent of the allowable limits as specified in the revised Part 20 for a member of the general public, which is more conservative than the current Part 20.

These estimates are applicable only to individuals who were in the most contaminated areas. These high levels appear to exist only in spotty areas in the administrative area and the average is substantially lower. The full evaluation is still underway.

The primary concern of NRC is the adequacy of the control of radioactive material that allowed this contamination to occur in the first place and then to go undetected in what should be clean areas.

Original Signed by
Hugh L. Thompson, Jr.

Hugh L. Thompson, Jr.
Deputy Executive Director for
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[redacted]

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