

STATE OF MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
2500 Broening Highway Baltimore, Maryland 21224
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William Donald Schaefer
Governor

Robert Perciasepe
Secretary

August 6, 1992

Mr. John McGrath
Regional State Liaison Officer
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Region I
475 Allendale Road
King of Prussia PA 19406

RE: Request for Technical Assistance

Dear Mr. McGrath:

This letter refers to the August 4, 1992 meeting between the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission (USNRC) regarding USNRC radiation safety concerns about Neutron Products Inc. (NPI). As a result of these discussions, it was determined that our two agencies would work together under a team concept to identify solutions to radiation safety concerns at NPI. It was further determined that, upon a written request by MDE, the USNRC could provide technical assistance in the following areas:

- A. Uncontrolled release of cobalt-60 from the NPI facility.
- B. Radioactive material waste management practices at NPI.
- C. Decommissioning of NPI.

The Radiological Health Programs's (RHP) concerns regarding the uncontrolled release of Co-60 at NPI are listed below:

1. What is the pathway(s) of uncontrolled release of Co-60 from the NPI facility which has resulted in the ongoing windborne deposition of radioactive particles into the Dickerson, Maryland community?
2. What is the maximum radioactivity that can be released by the above pathway?
3. How long has the release been occurring?
4. What is a reasonable estimation as to the total or yearly inventory of radioactivity that is being released by the above pathway?
5. What is the potential dispersion radius for these particles around the NPI facility?

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6. What are the potential health risks associated with the unrestricted dispersion of these particles?
7. Once the above pathway has been identified, what engineering and/or procedural remedial actions should NPI implement?

The RHP's concerns regarding radioactive material waste practices are listed below:

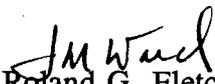
1. Are current radioactive waste practices and procedures at NPI adequate to assure radiation safety?
2. Can better radiation safety procedures dealing with the removal of hot waste be implemented during the hot cell cleanup following a NPI melt?
3. Is the present NPI radioactive material waste storage facility adequate to protect the general public and NPI employees?
4. Are NPI procedures for radioactive material waste shipments adequate?
5. What is the potential of radioactive material release relevant to a fire in the waste storage area?
6. Can a definition be reached on what is radioactive material waste at NPI, and what the current inventory of that waste is?

The RHP's concerns regarding the decommissioning of NPI are as follows:

1. What is the cost estimate for a decommissioning of NPI?

The RHP staff greatly appreciates your time, consideration, and expertise of the above matters. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Raymond Manley or me at (410) 631-3301, and we will be pleased to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,


F. Roland G. Fletcher, Administrator
Radiological Health Program

RGF/REM/dpn