



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

APR 10 1992

Mr. James E. Kerrigan  
AMAX Resource Conservation Company  
1626 Cole Boulevard  
Golden, Colorado 80401-3293

Dear Mr. Kerrigan:

As you may know, in 1990, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission developed the Site Decommissioning Management Plan (SDMP) to identify and resolve policy and regulatory issues affecting the timely decommissioning of sites listed in the SDMP. The SDMP is updated annually to evaluate progress on site decommissioning. A site is placed on the SDMP list if it meets one of the following criteria: (1) there are problems with the viability of the responsible organization (e.g., inability to pay or unwillingness to perform decommissioning); (2) there are large amounts of contaminated material to dispose of; (3) there is a long-term presence of contaminated, unused buildings; (4) the license was previously terminated; or (5) there is contamination or potential contamination from wastes buried onsite. While the SDMP has been effective in resolving issues related to site decommissioning, progress on actual site cleanup continues to be slow.

The limited progress to date has prompted the Commission to develop an action plan to accelerate the cleanup of SDMP sites. On April 8, 1992, the NRC released a copy of the action plan in conjunction with a press release. A copy of the press release and action plan are enclosed for your information. The NRC expects to publish the action plan in the Federal Register within two weeks. The NRC staff will also be contacting each licensee or responsible party listed in the SDMP to initiate site-specific steps to implement the applicable parts of the action plan.

You are encouraged to contact the NRC site project managers to determine the applicability of the action plan to your site(s).

Sincerely,

John H. Austin, Chief  
Decommissioning and Regulatory Issues Branch  
Division of Low-Level Waste Management  
and Decommissioning  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards

Enclosure: As stated

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# UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## NRC APPROVES ACTION PLAN TO ASSURE TIMELY CLEANUP OF SITES CONTAMINATED WITH RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved an action plan that will help ensure the timely cleanup of a group of over 40 nuclear materials sites that the Commission has identified as being contaminated with radioactive materials and that warrant special attention by the Commission.

Some of these sites still are subject to the requirements of an active NRC license; for other sites, the NRC license has been terminated; and others never were licensed by the NRC.

All of the sites have buildings, former waste disposal areas, large piles of tailings, groundwater and/or soil contaminated with low levels of uranium or thorium or other radioactive materials and presenting varying degrees of radiological hazard, cleanup complexity and cost.

At some sites, licensees are financially and technically capable of completing cleanup in a reasonable time frame; at others, the licensee or other responsible party is unable or unwilling to perform cleanup. All of the sites are ready for decommissioning and, in some cases, decommissioning activities have been initiated; at others, no decommissioning plans have been prepared and no decommissioning work has been started.

Most of these sites (a list is attached) were identified in 1990 as part of the NRC staff's development of a Site Decommissioning Management Plan (SDMP) to identify and resolve issues associated with the timely cleanup of contaminated sites. The SDMP has been effective in ensuring coordination and resolution of some policy and regulatory issues, but progress on actual cleanup of these sites continues to be slow.

The Action Plan details the NRC's approach to assuring that cleanup of these sites is accelerated and communicates the Commission's general expectation that they be cleaned up in a timely and effective manner. Specifically, the plan:

(1) identifies current criteria to guide cleanup of contaminated soils, structures and equipment and emphasizes the site-specific application of the as low as reasonably achievable (ALARA) principle;

(2) states the NRC's position on the finality of decommissioning decisions;

(3) describes the NRC's general expectation that the cleanup of these sites will be completed within a four-year period after operations cease or three years after the NRC staff issues an initial cleanup order;

(4) identifies currently available guidance on site characterization work in support of decommissioning; and

(5) describes the process for timely cleanup on a site-specific basis.

The Action Plan does not contain enforceable standards and is not intended to create new rights or obligations on third parties. Implementation of the plan may require the establishment of legally-binding requirements by order or license amendment on a case-by-case basis and the plan is not intended to affect the hearing rights associated with such orders or license amendments.

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Attachment

EXISTING SITE DECOMMISSIONING MANAGEMENT PLAN (SDMP) SITES

30-16055	Advanced Medical Systems	Cleveland, OH
	✓ ALCOA	Cleveland, OH
	✓ AMAX	Wood City, WV
70-6394	Aberdeen Proving Ground (Department of Army)	Aberdeen, MD
	<del>Watershed</del> Watertown Arsenal/mall	Watertown, MA
	✓ Babcock and Wilcox	Apollo, PA
	✓ Babcock and Wilcox	Parks Township, PA
	✓ BP Chemicals	Lima, OH
70-19963	Budd Company	Philadelphia, PA
40-6945	Cabot Corporation	Boyertown, PA
40-6945	Cabot Corporation	Reading, PA
40-6945	Cabot Corporation	Revere, PA
	✓ Chemetron Corporation (Bert Ave.)	Cleveland, OH
	✓ Chemetron Corporation (Harvard Ave.)	Cleveland, OH
70-703	Chevron Corporation	Pawling, NY
	✓ Dow Chemical	Midland, MI
None	Elkem Metals	Marietta, OH
70-139	Engelhard	Plainville, MA
	✓ Fansteel	Muskogee, OK
None	<del>General Services Administration</del>	Watertown, Boston, MA
40-1790	Hartley and Hartley	Bay City, MI
70-2970	Heritage Minerals	Lakehurst, NJ
70-925	Kerr-McGee (Cimarron) Cimarron	Crescent, OK
	✓ Kerr-McGee	Cushing, OK
40-795	Magnesium Elektron	Flemington, NJ
30-18276	NE Ohio Regional Sewer District	Cuyahoga Heights, OH
-672, 40-8866	Nuclear Metals	Concord, MA
	✓ Molycorp	Washington, PA
	✓ Molycorp	York, PA
30-29282	Permagrain Products	Media, PA
40-8406	Pesses Chemical	Pulaski, PA
0-7022	Process Technology	Rockaway, NJ
40-8767	Remington Arms Company	Independence, MO
	RMI Titanium	Ashtabula, OH
70-5980	Safety Light Corporation	Bloomsburg, PA
40-792	Schott Glass	Duryea, PA
20-5047	Shieldalloy	Cambridge, MA
	✓ Shieldalloy	Newfield, NJ
40-32	Texas Instruments	Attleboro, MA
	✓ United Nuclear Corporation	Wood River Junction, RI
30-19594	<del>Victoreen</del> Old Vic, Etc.	Cleveland, OH
70-699	Westinghouse (Waltz Mill)	Madison, PA
8225, 40-8866	West Lake Landfill	St. Louis, MO
	✓ Whittaker Metals	Greenville, PA
	✓ Wyman-Gordon	North Grafton, MA
70-852, 40-102	3M Company	New Brighton, MN