

Davis
25/1/83

SEP 29 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: William J. Dircks
 Executive Director for Operations

FROM: John G. Davis, Director
 Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards

SUBJECT: EPA'S SUPERFUND NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST

On September 1, 1983, EPA announced that 133 additional hazardous waste sites are eligible for priority action under the Superfund program. EPA previously published a proposed list of 418 sites in December 1982. Taking account of the additional sites and minor adjustments to the original list, EPA's current National Priorities List identifies 546 hazardous waste sites eligible for Superfund remedial action funding.

The original (proposed) National Priorities List identified six radioactive waste sites as discussed in my memorandum to you on December 29, 1982 (copy enclosed). The additional list of 133 sites includes two more radioactive waste sites as follows:

- (i) Lincoln Park
 Canon City, Colorado

Groundwater supplies in the Lincoln Park section of Canon City, Colorado, have been affected by the waste disposal activities of a nearby uranium mill operated by Cotter Corporation since 1958. The mill is operated under a source material license issued by the State of Colorado.

This site is included in Hazards Group 8 (Group 1 is the most hazardous and Group 9 is the least hazardous grouping). A course of action for cleanup at this site has not yet been decided (Status D).

- (ii) W. R. Grace and Company (Wayne Plant)
 Wayne Township, New Jersey

Grace, and its predecessor, Rare Earth's, Inc., extracted thorium and rare earths from monazite ore at this site from 1948 to 1971. The site was released for unrestricted use by the NRC in 1975 with a proviso that a notation be made in the deed that radioactive material was buried on the site.

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Subsequently, in 1981 elevated radiation levels were detected both on and off the Grace property as a result of an aerial radiation survey. In 1982, Congress directed the Department of Energy to undertake a decontamination research and development project involving this site and vicinity properties along with three other sites and vicinity properties (Stepan Chemical, Maywood, New Jersey; Cotter Corporation, Latty Avenue, Hazelwood, Missouri, and a site at Albany, New York). Two million dollars were provided to initiate work at the W. R. Grace site.

This site is included in Group 4. A course of action for cleanup has not been decided for this site (Status D).

The revised National Priorities List (NPL) of 546 sites provides some new information concerning the original six radioactive waste sites as follows:

- (a) Maywood Chemical Company
Maywood/Rochelle Park, New Jersey

The original (proposed) NPL indicated that a course of action for cleanup of sites located in Maywood and Rochelle Park had not been decided (Status D). The revised NPL indicates that conditions are currently being addressed through a State or Federal enforcement action against parties responsible for wastes at the site (Status E). Note that this site and vicinity properties is now covered by a DOE research and development program. (See discussion under (ii) above.)

- (b) Homestake Mining Company
Milan, New Mexico

The original (proposed) NPL had this site listed in Group 5 and indicated that a course of action for cleanup had not been decided (Status D). The revised NPL has it in Group 7 and indicates that conditions are currently being addressed partially through EPA sanctioned voluntary actions and partially through enforcement actions against the parties responsible for the wastes at the site (Status V and E).

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(c) Teledyne Wah Chang
Albany, Oregon

The original (proposed) NPL had this site listed in
Group 4. The revised NPL has it moved up to Group 2.

If you would like more information concerning the Superfund National
Priorities List, we would be happy to brief you.

(Signed) John G. Davis

John G. Davis, Director
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosure: As stated

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DEC 29 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: William J. Dircks
 Executive Director for Operations

FROM: John G. Davis, Director
 Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards

SUBJECT: EPA ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROPOSED NATIONAL PRIORITY
 LIST OF HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES

On Monday, December 20, 1982, EPA announced completion of a proposed priority list of 418 hazardous waste sites, ranked by their potential threat to public health and safety. The list was published for a 60-day public comment period before a final list of priority sites is issued.

In discussing the proposed list with Federal agencies (National Response Team Representatives -- NRC represented by R. G. Page) just before the list was publically released, the EPA spokesman stated that only 6 radioactive waste sites were included in the list of 418. He stated that EPA had specifically excluded any site under the responsibility of NRC.

We have read through the voluminous pages of information on the 418 sites and have identified the following six radioactive waste sites:

1. Denver Radium Sites
 Denver, Colorado

Some 35 sites in the State of Colorado (31 are located in metropolitan Denver area) have varying levels of radioactivity due to residues of the radium industry.

These sites are included in Group 4 (Group 1 is the most hazardous and Group 9 is the least hazardous grouping of the 418 sites).

Some Federal or State funding has already been designated to cleanup these sites. (Status - R)

2. Maywood Chemical Sites
 Maywood/Rochelle Park, New Jersey

Thorium is dispersed around the old Maywood Chemical property where thorium was processed as far back as World War I. The same material was used as fill in two other locations in Maywood. Thorium was detected at levels significantly higher than background in a private home built on a residential site.

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This site is included in Group 3. A course of action for cleanup has not yet been decided. (Status - D)

3. U. S. Radium Corporation
Orange, New Jersey

The company operated between 1915 and 1926 processing 0.5 tons of ore per day and disposed of wastes on site. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has found airborne radon and radon progeny in concentrations that could endanger the 100 people working at the old factory site.

This site is included in Group 6. A course of action for cleanup has not yet been decided. (Status - D)

4. Homestake Mining Company
Milan, New Mexico

The Homestake Mining Company has operated a uranium mill near Milan, New Mexico since 1958. Seepage from two large tailings ponds on the site has contaminated a shallow aquifer that provides water to residents in several downgradient subdivisions. The water is unsafe for drinking and cooking.

This site is included in Group 5. A course of action for cleanup has not yet been decided. (Status - D)

5. United Nuclear Corporation
Churchrock, New Mexico

UNC has operated a uranium mill near Churchrock, New Mexico since May 1977. Tailings from the mill are deposited in a large impoundment on site. A break in the tailings dam in 1979 released 93 million gallons of tailings fluid to the Rio Puerco River.

This site is included in Group 8. A course of action for cleanup has not yet been decided. (Status - D)

6. Teledyne Wah Chang
Albany, Oregon

This company is the largest producer of zirconium and other rare earth metals and alloys in the Free World. These products are used principally in the nuclear power industry and the Department of Defense. Production began in 1957. The waste water discharges and the waste solids contain radioactive materials. Heavy metals and chlorinated organic solvents have also been found on site.


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This site is included in Group 4. A course of action for cleanup has not yet been decided. (Status - D)

If you would like more information concerning EPA's proposed list of hazardous sites, we will be happy to brief you.

Original Signed by
Richard E. Cunningham

 John G. Davis, Director
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosure: Information Concerning
Grouping and Response Status for
Proposed National Priorities List

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INFORMATION CONCERNING GROUPING AND
RESPONSE STATUS FOR PROPOSED NATIONAL PRIORITIES LIST

The Proposed National Priorities List includes 418 sites. It is compiled in groups of 50 with Group 1 sites ranked highest priority and Group 9 sites ranked lowest priority. (Group 9 contains only 18 sites.) Sites are not numbered 1 through 418 in priority because this could mislead the public into thinking that EPA's Hazard Ranking System can make such fine distinctions and that EPA will take actions in the exact order of the list. Sites are listed in order of score except that 26 sites had to be inserted into the top 100 to meet CERCLA requirements regarding States' top priorities.

The Response Status for each site is specified as follows:

- R - Some Federal or State funding has already been designated to commence removal or remedial actions under CERCLA.
- V - A voluntary agreement exists whereby a company has consented to commence response actions.
- E - A Federal or State court has mandated some form of non-consensual remedial action following a judicial proceeding.
- D - Actions are yet to be determined.