

**CINTICHEM, INC.**

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February 20, 1997

Mr. Dominick Orlando  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards  
Division of Waste and Decommissioning Projects Branch  
1 White Flint North  
11555 Rockville Pike  
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Mr. Orlando,

Reference: (a) Docket 70-687, License SNM639, Amendment #7  
Dated January 18, 1995  
(b) USNRC letter (J.W. Hickey) dated December 6,  
1996

The duration of the Cintichem decommissioning project has extended beyond the scheduled completion date that is specified in the last amendment to Condition H of the license (Ref. (a)).

It has been necessary to extend the project schedule for completion because:

- additional work scope was discovered in the performance of final surveys in areas of the site that were not part of the original decommissioning plan and,
- the very low levels that were established for the acceptance criteria for surface contamination has required an iterative process of alternating survey work with final remediation work in order to establish confidence that the criteria have been satisfied. Consequently, the duration of the final surveys had to be extended beyond what was anticipated in the last revision to license Condition H.

Currently, all remediation and survey work is scheduled to be finished by April 30, 1997. It is not known for certain when the confirmation survey report will be issued by ORISE, NRC's contractor, and subsequently, when the license will be terminated by the NRC. Your letter of December 6, 1996 (Ref. (b)) concerning the extension of the SNM 639 license expiration date, allowed an indefinite termination date provided decommissioning efforts were actively pursued. In view of the developmental nature of the final work described above and the fact that the final decision about declaring the project completion will be made by the NRC, we believe that this rationale is very appropriate for this stage of the project and that Condition H of the license should be amended to be less definite.

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However, if there is still a requirement to specify a definite date by which the decommissioning will be completed, we recommend that an ample contingency period be provided to allow for the developmental nature of the final survey process and for the need to obtain NRC's concurrence through the confirmation survey process before the decommissioning project can be completed. In this event, we propose that December 31, 1997 be the new termination date specified in license Condition H.

Very Truly Yours,



James J. McGovern  
President

JJM/kfs

CC:

USNRC/RegionI/Mr. T. Dragoun  
ORISE/Mr. E. Abelquist  
NYDOL/Ms. R. Aldrich  
NYDEC/Ms. B. Youngberg  
USNRC/ORR/Mr. T. Michaels  
USNRC/NMSS/Mr. D. Orlando  
Mr. C. Warren  
Town of Tuxedo/Mr. K. Magar