



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

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OCT 25 1979

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The Honorable William J. Janklow  
Governor of South Dakota  
Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Dear Governor Janklow:

In your letter of September 24, 1979, you expressed concerns about above-background radiation levels at off-site locations in Edgemont, South Dakota, and the health risk posed by tailings to individuals living in the Cottonwood Community area. You specifically requested that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) join in a cooperative effort with the State of South Dakota, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) to: (1) determine the health risk for persons living in Cottonwood, and (2) determine the source and extent of radiation contamination in the Edgemont area. As indicated in my letter of September 14, 1979, such a cooperative effort is already underway. The following is an update on our activities in this area.

We are in full agreement that the health risk for Cottonwood Community residents should be determined as quickly as possible. The NRC is obtaining contractor assistance to take radon daughter concentration (RDC) and external gamma radiation measurements on open lands and inside structures in the Cottonwood area. The EPA has agreed to support the NRC in evaluation of the resulting measurement data and in development of the radiological assessment. As it would be most appropriate for the State to take the lead in gaining access to properties to permit these required measurements we request your assistance in this matter.

We also fully agree that the full extent of tailings contamination in Edgemont must now be determined in order to determine which properties require remedial action. This effort will begin as soon as the State can pave the way for the required radiation measurements and soil sampling with the owners/occupants of the properties involved. Steps will then be taken to obtain and analyze soil samples and to take other measurements as necessary to determine which properties require remedial action.

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The Honorable William J. Janklow - 2 -

With regard to your suggestion that we contact Warren R. Neufeld on this cooperative effort, arrangements have already been made for Mr. Ross Scarano of my staff to meet with Messrs. Neufeld and Meierhenry concerning this and other matters on October 30, 1979. If you need further information, please let us know.

Sincerely,



John B. Martin, Director  
Division of Waste Management

cc: Mr. S. David Freeman, Chairman  
Tennessee Valley Authority  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902

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