

SOUTH WEST NUCLEAR COMPANY

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PROPOSED RULE PR - 71(44FR48235) (24)

December 12, 1979



Secretary of the Commission
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

ATTN: Docketing and Service Branch

SUBJECT: Comments on Proposed Revision of 10 CFR Part 71

Gentlemen:

We are inclined to agree that the proposed changes in transportation rules are a definite improvement and should tend to eliminate any "guesswork" on the part of packagers and shippers of radioactive materials.

However, as is the case with nearly all regulations imposed to date, they have never really been addressed to radioactive waste materials. One of our concerns is the new requirement for specifications containers rather than the current authorization of "strong tight packaging". We strongly agree that "strong tight packaging" has been abused and should be discontinued, but would like to see some mechanism whereby large odd-shaped pieces of equipment that are peculiar to radioactive wastes could be handled in some manner more conducive to their peculiarities. For example, large pieces of equipment that cannot be readily disassembled without considerable effort, cost, and possible contamination and radiation exposures do not lend themselves to most Type A packaging.

Therefore, we would like to suggest some form of "one-time" permit based upon a description of packaging and contents in those instances where physical size reduction is impractical.

Another example of regulations not being written with waste in mind is when "special form" materials are defined. Once again, when encapsulated sources are made and are going to be shipped throughout the country and are being used in many applications, we can understand the importance of them meeting the prescribed test conditions. But when they are on their last trip to the disposal site and have been leak tested and/or checked for readily-removable contamination, why can't they be defined as special form material as was the accepted criteria originally?

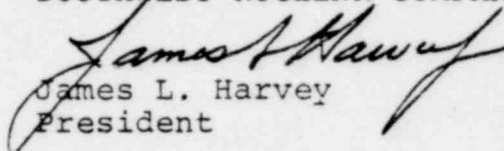
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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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We feel that such options would not represent any hazard to the public or the environment.

Sincerely,
SOUTHWEST NUCLEAR COMPANY


James L. Harvey
President

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