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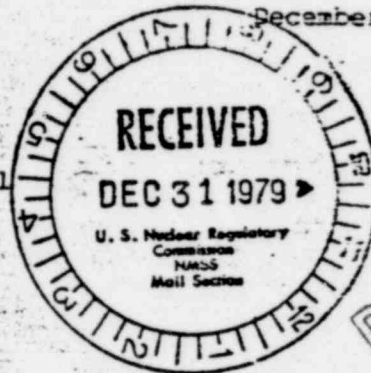
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COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

4210 EAST 11th AVENUE · DENVER, COLORADO 80220 · PHONE 320-8333

December 17, 1979

Robert G. Beverly
Director of Environmental Control
Union Carbide Corporation
P.O. Box 1029
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501

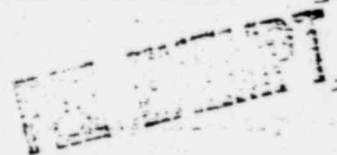


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Dear Mr. Beverly:

As a result of reviewing Union Carbide's Environmental Report, of on-site inspections on October 30 and December 11-13, 1979, and of a meeting December 13 between the Colorado Department of Health and Union Carbide officials and consultants, the Department is issuing the following orders, effective immediately, pursuant to the Radiation Control Act, Title 25, Article 11, Section 103(5), CRS 1973, as amended.

- A. To prevent further deterioration and to minimize the risk of partial or total failure of the tailings impoundments, the following shall be done immediately.
1. Discharge of liquid or tailings into pond 2 shall cease and shall not begin again until authorized in writing by the Department.
 2. Visual inspections, to determine changes in embankment surfaces or structure which forewarn of impending failure shall be made twice per each eight hour shift. To this end permanent lighting shall be installed along each face of ponds 2 and 3.
 3. All existing piezometers in the embankments of ponds 2 and 3 shall be read, recorded, and evaluated graphically for trends at least once each twenty-four hours. Adequate additional piezometers to evaluate and monitor the piezometric surface as it reflects impoundment stability shall be provided. Alternate systems for measuring impoundment stability shall be provided.
 4. A written warning and evacuation plan for both plant personnel and the community of Uravan, coordinated with local officials, shall be placed in effect.



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5. Procedures for shutdown of the A & B plants and their interconnections should embankment failure occur shall be placed in effect.

To mitigate the impact from a tailings embankment failure, the following is necessary: financial surety to cover cleanup, and third-party insurance, to cover liability for damages.

Union Carbide Corporation, upon completion of the actions taken pursuant to items 1 through 5 above, shall notify the Department in writing within seven (7) days, with copies of documentation.

- B. To enable timely action based upon the impending report from Geotechnical Engineers Inc., the following contingency action plans, with time frames, shall be received by the Colorado Department of Health before December 28, 1979.

Contingency 1: Imminent hazard is determined to exist due to potential embankment failure; the hazard cannot be eliminated by engineering repairs to meet U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and State of Colorado static and dynamic stability safety factors.

For contingency 1, Union Carbide shall specify protective action necessary to immediately mitigate the hazard.

Contingency 2: A hazard is determined to exist which can be sufficiently mitigated to permit use of the impoundments until an alternate tailings and raffinate disposal system is available.

For contingency 2, two alternatives are possible.

- a. If the proposed Phases I and II repairs are judged adequate for the operational period i.e. until an alternate disposal system is available, Union Carbide shall specify in detail the design and timetable of each step in completing the phased remedial work.
- b. If the proposed Phase I and II repairs are judged inadequate for the operational period, Union Carbide shall specify in detail what steps shall be taken in addition to completing Phases I and II.

If an imminent hazard is found to exist, the Department will issue additional orders necessary to minimize and eliminate the hazard. These orders may include an indefinite ban on discharge to the impoundments, further requirements for repair of deteriorating areas, relocation of endangered persons, and additional monitoring requirements.

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Failure to comply with this emergency order may require action by the State in accord with the provisions Title 24 and 25, CRS, 1973, as amended.

As also discussed at our December 13, 1979, meeting, the Department will be working with Union Carbide to determine the timetable for submissions by Union Carbide necessary to complete your license renewal application.

Sincerely,



Albert J. Hazle, Director
Radiation and Hazardous
Wastes Control Division

AJH:JLM:baw
cc: Larry DeClaire
Gerald Schierman

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