



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
REGION IV  
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ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76012

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August 10, 1979

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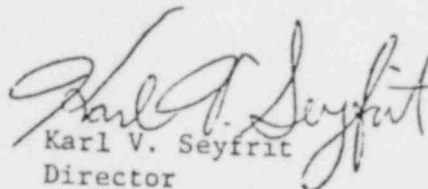
HELENA, CITY OF  
58 SOUTH LAST CHANCE GULCH  
HELENA MT 59601

Gentlemen:

Enclosed is IE Bulletin No. 79-19, which requires action by you with regard to your NRC license.

Should you have questions regarding this Bulletin or the actions required of you, please contact this office.

Sincerely,

  
Karl V. Seyfridt  
Director

Enclosures:

1. IE Bulletin No. 79-19
2. List of Bulletins Issued  
in Last Six Months

UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

IE Bulletin No. 79-19  
Date: August 10, 1979  
Page 1 of 3

PACKAGING OF LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE FOR TRANSPORT AND BURIAL

Description of Circumstances:

Low-level radioactive waste is that waste which can be transferred and shipped to one of three waste burial facilities which are located in and licensed by the Agreement States of Nevada, South Carolina, and Washington. On July 10, 1979, the Governors of the three states notified NRC Chairman Hendrie of the serious and repeated disregard for rules governing the shipments of low-level radioactive wastes to these burial facilities.

Examples of violations of Agreement State, DOT and NRC rules follow:

Improperly packaged uranium fines igniting packaged liquid scintillation vials in combustible waste is believed to have caused a fire and destruction of a truck at the Beatty, Nevada burial facility on May 14, 1979.

On July 2, 1979, three of twelve steel containers shipped to the Beatty burial facility were found to be leaking radioactive material. The material was described on the bill of lading as being a solid inorganic salt (evaporator concentrates solidified with urea formaldehyde) from a reactor facility. The Governor of the State of Nevada ordered the drums to be shipped out of the state and the burial facility was temporarily closed.

On July 30, the first shipment into the reopened Beatty facility contained free liquid in "solid" material. The radioactive contents were sand filters used at an insitu leaching process at a uranium mill.

Forty-three shipments with sixty-three deficiencies were observed during the package inspection program between April 10 and July 5, 1979, by the Agreement State of South Carolina, at the Barnwell, South Carolina burial facility. The shipments were from reactor, medical, industrial and military facilities.

On June 28, 1979, the Federal Highway Administration issued a Notice of Violation to a reactor facility proposing closure resulting from improper closures for improper loading of the drums on the

These are a few examples of shipments from facilities which did not fully meet NRC requirements which were developed to protect the health of the Governors of the three States with license that if the situation is not rectified, the NRC would deny use of the three burial sites.

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