



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

PDR-DCS

WM-34

MAR 21 1980

Mr. Albert J. Hazle
Radiation and Hazardous Wastes
Control Division
Colorado Department of Health
4210 East 11th Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80220

Dear Mr. Hazle:

We have completed the dam safety review for the Union Carbide Uravan mill as requested by your letter of November 4, 1979, to G. Wayne Kerr of NRC.

Results of the enclosed evaluation by our consultant, Geotechnical Engineers, Inc., (GEI) of the Phase I program indicate that ponds numbers 2 and 3 do not meet the safety factors recommended by NRC Regulatory Guide 3.11. NRC does not feel that there is any near term (less than 6-9 months) corrective action which can significantly change the safety factors and corresponding risk associated with the operation of ponds 2 and 3. We recommend that these ponds not be used for the impoundment of additional mill effluent before the completion and approval of the Phase II stabilization program.

It is also recommended that any continued use of pond 1 should be subject to the conditions outlined on pages 4 and 5 under the recommendations in section b of this report.

If you have further questions concerning the GEI report, please do not hesitate to call us.

Sincerely,

Ross A. Scarano, Chief
Uranium Recovery Licensing Branch
Division of Waste Management

Enclosure:
Safety Evaluation Report, Tailings Ponds 2 and 3,
Union Carbide Corporation, Uravan, Colorado, by
Geotechnical Engineers, Inc.

cc: Dr. Gonzalo Castro

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