

Kathe Andersen
East Fairchild CRC #206
1855 Sheridan Road
Evanston, IL 60201-3842

NOV 27 1989

Dear Ms. Andersen:

I am writing in response to your October 31, 1989 letter concerning the disposal of slightly contaminated low-level radioactive waste in sanitary landfills. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) published an advanced notice on this subject for public comment on December 12, 1988 (enclosed). A final policy statement is now under development and is expected to be published before the end of the year. Your letter has been docketed with other public comments on this matter.

Your letter expressed concern that the proposed NRC policy would allow certain low-level radioactive wastes to be disposed of without regulatory control. You were concerned that hundreds, if not thousands, of lives might be lost as a result of this policy due to increased radiation exposure of workers and the public. Please be assured that, if this policy is made final, the kinds of radioactive materials that could eventually be disposed of at landfills would be precisely specified. The levels of radioactivity would be controlled so that radiation exposure would be within approved safety limits for which the available scientific evidence indicates no significant health effects. Under the proposed policy, before acting to exempt a particular type of waste from regulatory control, the Commission would provide opportunity for public comment and would make available for public scrutiny the analyses supporting its proposed decision. Your view on any such future exemption action would be welcome and taken into consideration prior to a final NRC decision.

Thank you for your interest in this matter.

Sincerely, Original Signed by
MICHAEL J. BELL

Michael J. Bell, Chief
Regulatory Branch
Division of Low-Level Waste Management
and Decommissioning
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Enclosure: As stated

cc: M. Knapp, Region I

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SUBJECT ABSTRACT: RESPONSE TO LLWM 89-125

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