



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
REGION IV  
611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 1000  
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76012

RDR HQ

40-8092

August 10, 1979

STB-1084

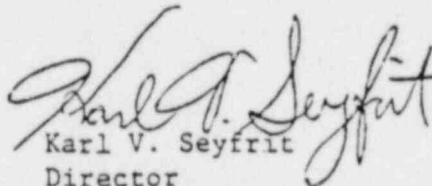
NATIONAL AERONAUTICS & SPACE ADMINI  
LYNDON B. JOHNSON SPACE CENTER,  
HOUSTON TX 77058

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. Seyfrit  
Director

Enclosures:

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

8009800 180

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

DUPLICATE

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 a \$10,000 fine for truck contamination resulting from improper closures on 55-gallon drums of LSA material and for improper loading of the drums on the vehicle.

These are a few examples of shipments of radioactive material to burial facilities which did not fully meet NRC, DOT and Agreement State requirements which were developed to protect the health and safety of the public. The Governors of the three States with licensed burial facilities have indicated that if the situation is not rectified, they may have to initiate actions which would deny use of the three burial sites by violators.

7. Establish and implement a management-controlled audit function of all transfer, packaging and transport activities to provide assurance that personnel, instructions and procedures, and process and transport equipment are functioning to ensure safety and compliance with regulatory requirements.
8. Perform, within 60 days of the date of this bulletin, a management-controlled audit of your activities associated with the transfer, packaging and transport of low-level radioactive waste. Maintain a record of all audits for future inspections by NRC or DOT inspectors. (Note: If you have an established audit function and have performed such an audit of all activities in Items 1-6 within the past six months, this audit requirement is satisfied.)
9. Report, in writing within 45 days, your plan of action and schedule with regard to the above items. In addition, provide responses to the three questions below. Reports should be submitted to the Director of the appropriate NRC Regional Office and a copy should be forwarded to the NRC Office of Inspection and Enforcement, Division of Fuel Facility and Materials Safety Inspection, Washington, D.C. 20555.

Provide answers for 1978 and for the first six months of 1979 to the following questions:

1. How many low-level radioactive waste shipments did you make? What was the volume of low-level radioactive waste shipped?  
  
(Power reactor licensees who report this information in accordance with Technical Specifications do not need to respond to this question.)
2. What was the quantity (curies) of low-level radioactive waste shipped? What were the major isotopes in the low-level radioactive waste?  
  
(Power reactor licensees who report this information in accordance with Technical Specifications do not need to respond to this question.)
3. Did you generate liquid low-level radioactive waste? If the answer is 'yes,' what process was used to solidify the liquid waste?

Licensees who do not generate low-level radioactive waste should so indicate in their responses and do not need to take other actions specified in the above items.

Approved by GAO, B180225 (R0072); clearance expires 7-31-80. Approval was given under a blanket clearance specifically for identified generic problems.

79-05A	Nuclear Incident at Three Mile Island	4/5/79	All Power Reactor Facilities with an Operating License (OL) or Construction Permit (CP)
79-05B	Nuclear Incident at Three Mile Island	4/21/79	All B&W Power Reactor Facilities with an Operating License (OL)
79-06	Review of Operational Errors and System Misalignments Identified During The Three Mile Island Incident	4/11/79	All Pressurized Water Power Reactor Facilities Except B&W Facilities
79-06A	Review of Operational Errors and System Misalignments Identified During the Three Mile Island Incident	4/14/79	All Westinghouse PWR Facilities with an Operating License (OL)
79-06A (Rev. 1)	Review of Operational Errors and System Misalignments Identified During the Three Mile Island Incident	4/18/79	All Pressurized Water Power Reactor Facilities of Westinghouse Design with an Operating License (OL)
79-06B	Review of Operational Errors and System Misalignments Identified During The Three Mile Island	4/14/79	All Combustion Engineering PWR Facilities with an Operating License (OL)
79-07	Seismic Stress Analysis of Safety-Related Piping	4/14/79	All Power Reactor Facilities with an Operating License (OL) or Construction Permit (CP)