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# HARRISBURG HOSPITAL

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DUCKET NUMBER  
PROPOSED RULE PR 20  
45 FR 67018

November 19, 1980

Mr. John Ahearne  
Acting Chairman  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Mr. Ahearne:

For many years the Harrisburg Hospital, as an institutional policy, has not released radioactive materials except those contained in human waste. We trap the radioactive gases used for ventilation studies. We bury Carbon-14 from culture media. The institution has felt that this policy should be continued. This decision is based upon the unique circumstances as we perceive them in the vicinity of Three Mile Island. We believe that although release of these (<sup>133</sup>Xe, <sup>14</sup>C) into the environment would probably not constitute any hazard, this approach will help to lessen the anxieties of the patients and residents we serve.

Increasing pressures are being applied to us (recommendations from regulatory agencies, the reduction in the number of burial sites available, the increasing cost of commercial burial) to change these disposal commitments. We feel that as an institution we will continue our present policy as long as possible. We recognize, however, that a decision to change may be required. In preparation for that, then, I would very much appreciate receiving any information that you have relative to the following questions:

1. How much <sup>14</sup>C is being released by medical institutions in the drainage area of the Susquehanna River?
2. How much of this <sup>14</sup>C do you think might be incinerated and released into the air in the vicinity of TMI?

Acknowledged by card.

11/24/80

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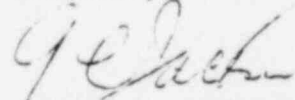
We are primarily concerned about  $^{14}\text{C}$  since it constitutes the bulk of the material which we presently bury. The quantity of  $^{14}\text{C}$  generated per week at our hospital is 200 uCi average.

If you have any information relative to  $^{133}\text{Xe}$  disposal from medical institutions in this area, we would greatly appreciate receiving that also.

I am sure it is obvious that the reason that we request this data is that should we change our disposal mechanism and should this decision be challenged by any of the many interested people or organizations we would have a logical answer to offer.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,



George L. Jackson, M.D.  
Radiation Safety Officer

GLJ:bg

cc Thomas Gerusky  
Radioisotope Committee