



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION I
631 PARK AVENUE
KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19406

Docket No. 70-820

DEC 11 1980

United Nuclear Corporation
ATTN: Mr. G. O. Amy
General Manager
UNC Recovery Systems
Wood River Junction, Rhode Island 02894

Gentlemen:

Subject: SHIPMENT OF PROCESS RESIDUES AND DRY EQUIPMENT FROM INSIDE THE UNC RECOVERY FACILITY

- Reference: 1) Letter, IAL 80-35, Boyce H. Grier to C. E. Bowers, dated October 1, 1980
- 2) Letter, same subject, R. J. Gregg to H. W. Crocker, dated October 28, 1980

During a telephone conversation with Mr. H. W. Crocker of this office on December 4, 1980, Mr. Gregg of your staff indicated that UNC Recovery Systems has received an allocation of burial space for the month of December from the State of South Carolina. He stated that you urgently need permission from the NRC to ship specific non-lagoon type waste from your facility to reduce the amount of special nuclear material you possess and to dispose of waste and take advantage of the burial space allocation.

It is our understanding that the waste you wish to ship is the same waste you previously requested permission to ship during late October in your letter of October 28, 1980 (reference 2). The request to ship these wastes which are recovery process residual waste in the form of calcined ash and facility decontamination waste in the form of dry metal, paper, cloth, etc. was denied by both the NRC and the State of Rhode Island. The NRC considered that the Immediate Action Letter (reference 1) required that no radioactive material, regardless of source, would be permitted to be shipped from your facility until the actions specified in the letter were taken. Since these actions had not been taken, the permission was denied at that time. On the basis of the NRC's preliminary findings on the shipments of waste returned to the UNC facility from Beatty, Nevada, on October 28, 1980, the Governor of Rhode Island directed the State Division of Public Utilities and Carriers to withhold issuance of state permits to transport radioactive waste material originating from your facility across Rhode Island highways.

Pertinent to this situation is the fact that the recovery process residual waste in the form of calcined ash is not low specific activity (LSA) radioactive material. Therefore, it is our understanding that you packaged this material in

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accordance with your quality assurance program for packaging radioactive materials, QAP-001, as required by 10 CFR 71.51.

In addition to the foregoing, we have a draft copy of your Quality Assurance Program for Preparation and Shipping of LSA Radioactive Materials, QAP-004, which you will send to the Uranium Fuel Licensing Branch for approval and inclusion in your license. We also have copies of the procedures you have prepared to implement this program.

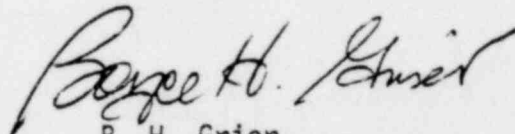
On the basis of the above facts, upon verification by an NRC inspector that the recovery process residual waste in the form of calcined ash is packaged in accordance with your QAP-001 quality assurance program for packaging radioactive material required by 10 CFR 71.51, the NRC will approve the shipment of this calcined ash waste.

With respect to the facility decontamination waste, although this waste is LSA waste and all of it was not packaged under either of your quality assurance programs, upon verification by an NRC inspector that this material was packaged under sufficient control to assure that no liquids are present in the packages and the packages are strong and tight, the NRC will approve the shipment of this waste.

However, the shipment of lagoon wastes and boxes and drums of yard waste is not and will not be approved until: 1) your quality assurance program for the preparation and shipping of LSA radioactive material has been approved by the Uranium Fuel Licensing Branch and included in your license; and 2) Region I has verified that this approved program and the implementing procedures are in effect and being followed.

We are providing a copy of this letter to the State of Rhode Island. Should you have any questions concerning this matter, we will be pleased to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,



B. H. Grier
Director

cc:
State of Rhode Island
R. J. Gregg, Plant Manager of UNC Recovery Systems