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Pond/Pool



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 5

230 SOUTH DEARBORN ST.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60604

MAR 05 1990

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

Jerry Swift  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards  
Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Swift:

We are writing regarding the permanent disposal of waste materials containing thorium and other constituents at the Kerr-McGee Rare Earths Facility at West Chicago, DuPage County, Illinois. The location of the disposal site in an urbanized area and the fact that there may be a need to provide long term maintenance for 1,000 years for the earthen cell have raised technical issues which we must properly resolve in this disposal situation.

At this time, we are seeking new technical support to determine if the measures selected will meet our standards and ensure that the project is protective of public health and the environment. We are anticipating that this technical information will be available in the near future, and we will inform you of the results. If the findings indicate that your present plans are inadequate to protect the public health and the environment, we will recommend that further actions be taken by your Agency. Furthermore, unresolved concerns relative to dose calculations cited in our letter of July 27, 1989 will also be reiterated. You should note that our Office of Superfund will be contacting Kerr-McGee in a separate letter within the next month regarding CERCLA issues relative to the West Chicago site. Since Kerr-McGee proposes to dispose materials collected from the Superfund sites, the final design of the cell will have to satisfy our requirements so that public health is protected. At this time, based upon the available information, we are unsure that this requirement has been met. We will, certainly, provide you a copy of our letter to Kerr-McGee.

There has been extensive dialogue between our agencies on this issue, and I hope we will continue to have cooperation throughout this process. We will be contacting you once our evaluation of the technical information has been completed. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. William D. Franz, Chief of the Environmental Review Branch, FTS 886-7500.

Sincerely yours,

*Robert Springer*  
Robert Springer  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
for Planning and Management

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