

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION I

Report No. 40-501/82-01

Docket No. 40-501

License No. C-5023 Priority _____ Category _____

Licensee: Aluminum Company of America, Buffalo Works

1880 Elmwood Avenue

Buffalo, New York

Facility Name: Gruber Supply Corp./Commercial Pipe and Supply

Inspection at: 1880 Elmwood Avenue/1920 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, New York

Inspection conducted: June 29, 1982

Inspector: Jenny M. Johansen
Jenny M. Johansen, Radiation Specialist
USNRC

July 22, 1982
date signed

Robert F. Kelley, Senior Radiophysicist
State of New York

date signed

Approved by: John D. Kinneman
John D. Kinneman, Chief, Materials Section
No. 1

7/28/82
date signed

Inspection Summary:

Inspection conducted on June 29, 1982 (Report 40-501/82-01)

Areas Inspected: Special announced closeout inspection of a formerly licensed site engaged in production of magnesium thorium casting alloys, including interviews with current site owners and independent measurements of radiation levels. The Region I inspector was accompanied by a representative of the State of New York.

Results: All thorium had been removed from the site when the licensee vacated the site on June 24, 1958. No radiation levels above background were identified in areas surveyed. The site meets current criteria for release for unrestricted use.

DETAILS

1. Individuals Contacted

- A. Carl Gruber, President
Gruber Supply Corporation
1880 Elmwood Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14207
- B. John Hurley, President
Commercial Pipe and Supply
1920 Elmwood Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14207

2. Background

Aluminum Corporation of America (ALCOA) was licensed for the experimental use and production of magnesium thorium alloys under AEC License No. C-5023 which named ALCOA's Buffalo, New York and Cleveland, Ohio Works as authorized places of use. This license expired February 28, 1961 (see Enclosure A). Information supplied to NRC's Office of State Programs by the State of New York dated September 11, 1980 indicated that ALCOA registered 30 mCi of natural thorium (approximately 594 pounds) pursuant to NYS Industrial Code 38, effective December 15, 1955; however all materials were returned to the A.E.C. prior to June 24, 1958 (See Enclosure B).

New York State performed a close-out survey of the ALCOA Buffalo Works at 1880 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, New York, on June 26, 1958 and found no evidence of any radioactivity in any part of the plant. The report also indicates ALCOA vacated the site on June 24, 1958. (See Enclosure B).

3. Inspector's Observations and Interviews with Current Occupants of the Formerly Licensed Site

The site formerly occupied by ALCOA Buffalo works at 1880 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, New York has been owned and occupied by Gruber Supply Corporation since March 1, 1973. The facility consists of a two story office/store building (approximately 7,000 ft²) connected by a loading dock/skylight storage area (approximately 9,000 ft²) to a large warehouse (approximately 67,500 ft²). The construction of the facility is brick on concrete slab. The warehouse area is in part subdivided into smaller storage rooms. (See Enclosure C) the warehouse area is used for storage of plumbing and bathroom fixtures.

The inspectors met with individual A and discussed the scope and purpose of their visit. Individual A provided the inspectors with a site diagram and granted permission for a survey of the site. He suggested the inspectors contact individual B since the ALCOA foundry site had also included the warehouse building at 1920 Elmwood Avenue which shares a common wall and is directly adjacent to 1880 Elmwood Avenue. (See Enclosure C).

The inspectors contacted individual B, discussed the background, purpose and scope of the inspection. Individual B granted permission for a survey of his warehouse.

The warehouse building (approximately 22,500 ft²) at 1920 Elmwood Avenue shares an approximately 75 foot length along its southern walls in common with 1880 Elmwood. The building walls are brick and the floor is cement slab in some areas. This warehouse building is currently being used for storage of various size pipe.

4. Independent Measurements

The inspectors were accompanied during their surveys by individual A at 1880 Elmwood Avenue and individual B at 1920 Elmwood Avenue. Radiation levels were measured at knee level using a Ludlum Model 12S MicroR meter calibrated April 19, 1982.

1880 Elmwood Avenue: Radiation levels ranged from 4 to 8 microroentgens per hour in the offices, hallways and store areas, from 6 - 10 micro-roentgens per hour in the loading dock skylight, storage rooms and total warehouse area. Radiation levels increased up to 16 microroentgens per hour when the survey meter was placed directly on the brick walls. Radiation levels ranged from 6 - 10 microroentgens per hour in the outside environs 5 to 20 feet from the walls of the buildings on the site.

1920 Elmwood Avenue: Radiation levels ranged from 6 - 10 microroentgens per hour within the warehouse building with an increase up to 16 micro-roentgens per hour when the survey meter was placed directly on the brick walls. Radiation levels in the outside environs 5 to 20 feet from the walls of the warehouse ranged from 6 - 10 microroentgens per hour.

5. Exit Interviews

The inspectors reviewed the scope and results of their findings separately with individuals A and B.

6. Conclusion

Radiation levels measured at 1880 and 1920 Elmwood Avenue are indicative of the natural background of the site.

The site meets current NRC criteria for release for unrestricted use.