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J. R. Roeder, Chief, Materials Inspection & Enforcement Branch  
Division of Compliance, Headquarters

COMPLIANCE INQUIRY MEMORANDUM

W. R. GRACE & COMPANY

POMPTON PLAINS, NEW JERSEY

LICENSE NO. STA-422

TRANSPORTATION OCCURRENCE - Spill of Natural Thorium in Unrefined Ore  
(Monazite Sand)

On December 30, 1968 at 4:45 PM Mr. W. R. Lorenz, Radiation Specialist, CO:1, received a telephone call from Mr. Peter Garino, R.S.O. for subject licensee, who reported the following transportation occurrence.

On the morning of December 30, 1968, a shipment of eight 100 lbs bags of monazite sand was being transported by the Acme Transfer Company (a trucking company) for the Associated Metals and Minerals Co., N.Y., N.Y. The sand was imported from Australia. The bags were loaded on pallets.

On U. S. Route 23, 3 miles north of the U.S. Route 46 intersection in Wayne, N.J., seven of the eight bags fell off the truck. The bags were discovered by the local police, who began contacting the local chemical companies to find the owner. The bags were labeled "Caution-Radioactive Materials".

The W. R. Grace Company identified the bags as belonging to it, and Mr. Garino was sent to retrieve them. Upon arriving at the site, a reporter from the "Wayne Today" daily newspaper was at the scene taking pictures of the accident. The reporter became aware of the accident from monitoring police calls.

Mr. Garino said six of the seven bags were intact, and approximately 5 lbs of the seventh bag spilled. The sand, including that which spilled, was transported back to the company plant. The radiation level measured on contact with the bags was reported at 1.75 mr/hr using a 0-50 mr/hr Antoa Model No. 5 G-M type survey meter. The area after cleaning was measured at contact at 0.2 mr/hr. Mr. Garino assured the reporter that the activity was extremely low and that there was no physical danger to anyone who came in contact with the road.

The accident was reported by Garino to his main office in Baltimore. The Baltimore office suggested that our office be notified.

On December 31, 1968 Garino was asked via telephone if the bags of monazite sand received at his plant resembled those found on a street in Newark, N.J., on December 16, 1968 (ref: CIM dated December 24, 1968). He confirmed the bags received by Grace bore the same markings as those found in Newark, but stated his belief the latter bags were not consigned to Grace, since they were expecting no material at that time and had got no shipment with some bags missing.

NYO Public Information Officer, NJ State Health Department and CO:HQ were informed of this occurrence on December 31, 1968. Mr. Charles Amato of NJ Health stated his intent to have a representative visit the scene to confirm there was no residual contamination and to ensure the local reporter had an accurate understanding of the lack of hazard associated with the spill.

There appears to be no hazard associated with this spill; the material appears to be exempt from AEC regulation (10CFR40.13(b)); and this office plans no further action. It may be appropriate for CO:HQ to inform the Department of Transportation of this spill for their information.

R. S. Cleveland  
Senior Radiation Specialist