

DEC 24 1990

In Reply Refer To:  
License: SNM-1101  
Docket: 070-01167/90-01

Northwestern Oklahoma State University  
ATTN: Dr. Joe J. Struckle  
President  
Alva, Oklahoma 73717

Gentlemen:

This refers to the routine, unannounced radiation safety inspection conducted by Mr. Richard A. Leonardi, Jr., of this office on November 28, 1990, of the activities authorized by NRC Byproduct Material License No. SNM-1101, and to the discussion of our findings held by the inspector with members of your staff at the conclusion of the inspection.

The inspection was an examination of the activities conducted under the license as they relate to radiation safety and to compliance with the Commission's rules and regulations and the conditions of the license. The inspection consisted of selective examinations of procedures and representative records, interviews of personnel, independent measurements, and observations by the inspector.

The inspector determined that the licensee has possessed a 5 curie plutonium-beryllium (Pu-Be) neutron source contained in a howitzer since April 1970 for the purposes of academic instruction and for conducting occasional activation studies. The inspector noted that the storage area for the howitzer was adequate and the door leading to the storage area was locked and properly posted. Although the use of the howitzer is limited to a single use each year, the NRC is concerned about the continued safety of the neutron source as evidenced by the nature of the violations identified.

The inspector further noted that during a conversation with a licensee representative, the licensee is considering the transfer or disposal of the neutron source. The licensee should consider amending its license to authorize the possession of the neutron source for storage only until a decision is made regarding the final disposition of the neutron source.

During this inspection, certain of your activities were found not to be conducted in full compliance with NRC requirements. Consequently, you are required to respond to this matter in writing, in accordance with the provisions of Section 2.201 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," Part 2, Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations. Your response should be based on the specifics contained in the Notice of Violation enclosed with this letter.

RIV:NMSIS *RTZ*  
RLeonardi:lm  
12/13/90

C:NMSIS *RWB*  
CLCain  
12/19/90

ID:DRSS  
ABBeach  
12/19/90

9101030051 901224  
PDR ADOCK 07001167  
C PDR

020009

JE-07

Northwestern Oklahoma  
State University

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In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the Commission's regulations, a copy of this letter, the enclosure, and your response to this letter will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

The response directed by this letter and the accompanying Notice is not subject to the clearance procedures of the Office of Management and Budget as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, PL 96-511.

Should you have any questions concerning this letter, we will be pleased to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,

*Original Signed By:*  
**A. B. BEACH**

A. Bill Beach, Director  
Division of Radiation Safety  
and Safeguards

Enclosure:  
Appendix - Notice of Violation

cc:  
Oklahoma Radiation Control Program Director

bcc:  
DMB - Original (1E-07)  
RDMartin  
ABBeach  
LAYandell  
MRodriguez, OC/LFDCB (4503)  
\*WLFisher  
\*CLCain  
\*RALeonardi  
\*NMSIS  
\*MIS System  
\*RIV Files (2)  
\*RSTS Operator  
\*REHall, URFO  
  
\*W/766