



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

AUG 6 1990

36

Mr. Raymond Savel, President
Mosquito Creek Sportsmen's
Association
Frenchville, PA 16836

Dear Mr. Savel:

I am responding to your July 6, 1990, letter to Chairman Carl in which you expressed your concern regarding a Nuclear Regulatory Commission policy that could result in certain licensed radioactive material being exempted from the full scope of regulatory controls. As you may be aware, the Commission issued this policy on July 3, 1990. I have enclosed a copy of the policy and a companion explanatory booklet for your information (Enclosures 1 and 2). I would point out that the policy is not self-executing and does not, by itself, deregulate any radioactive material from regulatory control. Any specific exemption decisions would be accomplished through rulemaking or licensing actions during which the opportunity for public comment would be provided in those situations where generic exemptions provisions have not already been established.

As you will note in the enclosed material, the Commission believes that the nation's best interests would be served by a policy that provides a consistent risk framework within which exemption decisions can be made with assurance that human health and the environment are protected. Just as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania must decide what constitutes appropriate cleanup levels for hazardous waste sites, the Commission must make similar decisions regarding the activities it regulates. We must determine to what extent a licensee must cleanup facilities, lands and/or equipments before they can be released for unrestricted public use. In addition, the Commission must decide what quantities or concentrations of radioactive material should be allowed in various consumer products for which the Commission has licensing authority. For example, smoke detectors and self-luminous products (e.g., watches, gunsights) containing small amounts of radioactive material have been licensed and available for public use for a number of years. In all these cases, potential public exposures are conservatively estimated and must be shown to be sufficiently small to provide proper protection to the public and the environment. To give you some perspective on the small levels of radiation we are discussing, I would refer you to the discussion in the enclosed booklet beginning on page 5 under the heading, "Radiation: Some Background and Perspective."

The Commission is aware of the public's anxieties regarding this policy. As a result, a series of public meetings is being held at locations across the country to discuss the policy, to hear statements from the public, and to answer questions about the policy. I have enclosed a copy of the Federal Register notice announcing the meeting dates and locations (Enclosure 3). Although an NRC representative

B/21

Mr. Raymond Savel

2

will not be able to attend your rally on August 11, 1990. I encourage you and your association members to consider the policy, as described, and provide any comments or criticisms to us. This can be done in person at the King of Prussia meeting on September 18, 1990, or in writing to the designated Region 1 contact or directly to the Commission here in Washington, D.C.

In closing, I can assure you that we take our mandate to protect the health and safety of the public very seriously. As a result, we will continue to do our best in carefully and clearly responding to the issues and questions raised by you, your Spornmen's Association, and other concerned citizens.

Sincerely,

s/ CJHeltemes
for

Eric S. Beckjord, Director
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

Enclosures:

1. BRC Policy Statement
2. BRC Explanatory Booklet
3. Federal Register Notice

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