



UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20545

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CAH
RLD

MAR 11 1969

Harold L. Price, Director of Regulation

MILL TAILINGS

Martin Biles called me on Friday, March 7, 1969, to relay information concerning a meeting on March 28 between the Bureau of Radiological Health and the Colorado Department of Health, and an invitation to attend. Subject of the meeting will be a discussion of radon levels in houses in the Grand Junction and Durango areas.

The meeting is being arranged by Dr. Raymond T. Moore, Director of the Bureau of Radiological Health (successor to Jim Terrill) and was arranged at the request of Dr. Roy Cleere, Director of the Colorado Department of Health.

State and Licensee Relations has been in contact with the Colorado Department of Health on this matter and, according to Eber Price, learned from Robert D. Siek that the Department has been "uneasy" for several years about the use of mill tailings as foundation fill around new home construction by builders, especially in the Grand Junction area. The Department has surveyed a number of houses, and has found radon levels ranging in a few isolated cases up to 0.7 working level (WL). According to the information Dr. Biles had, the higher levels were in general found in remote corners of basements, but he was under the impression that a number of houses surveyed showed levels in the range of 0.1 WL.

We do not as yet have sufficient information regarding details as how the surveys were conducted, what the values were, or where these values were found, to draw any conclusions regarding the magnitude of any problem which may exist. We understand that the use of tailings in the Grand Junction area was stopped by Climax several years ago, so presumably the problem, if there is one, goes back to a time when tailings were used in the Grand Junction area. By way of information, it might be noted that the Commission informed the states in 1961 that it lacked authority to regulate the use of mill tailings for purposes unrelated to the uranium milling operation, and recommended that the states look into the possible problems which might develop. About five years ago, the Utah Department of Health blocked the use of tailings from the Vitro mill in Salt Lake City as road fill, and more recently Colorado has prohibited the transfer of uranium mill tailings without specific approval of the Department of Health.

MH-5-3-7

Mill Survey & Tailings (Uranium)

January 1, 1969 Through

Dec. 1970

NRC - Bethesda

Rec'd Off. Dir. of Reg.
Date 3/11/69
Time 3:44

FN 55

Chap 10

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PDR ORG NRCHIST
PDR



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File 3

Harold L. Price

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The meeting is to be held in Dr. Moore's office at Bureau of Radiological Health offices in Rockville at 9:30 a.m. I believe a representative each from DML, RPS, and SLR should attend.


J. A. McBride, Director
Division of Materials Licensing

cc: Eber Price, SLR
Forrest Western, RPS
L. D. Low, CO
D. A. Nussbaumer, DML

P.S. A copy of the letter confirming Dr. Biles' telephone conversation is enclosed.