



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
REGION III  
799 ROOSEVELT ROAD  
GLEN ELLYN, ILLINOIS 60137

September 27, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Region III Files

THRU: G. T. Loneragan, Chief, Materials Radiological  
Protection Section No. 1

FROM: C. T. Oberg, Radiation Specialist

SUBJECT: KERR-MCGEE CHEMICAL CORPORATION, WEST CHICAGO, ILLINOIS  
LICENSE NO. STA-583  
BRIEF TOUR OF FACILITY BY RIII INSPECTOR

On September 15, 1977, an NRC RIII inspector made a brief inspection tour of the subject licensee's West Chicago, Illinois Rare Earth Plant in a continuing effort to maintain cognizance of the status of the facility and the work in progress.

The Action Items (AI) No. 1 through 4, as agreed to by the licensee in their letter dated November 30, 1976, appear to remain satisfied. Work on AI No. 5 is in progress.

ATCOR personnel under contract to the subject licensee, continue to package waste source material from a storage shed in the waste area, in preparation for shipment to NECO, Sheffield, Illinois for burial.

At the time of this inspection, ATCOR personnel had an inventory of 365 55-gallon sealed drums of thorium waste material ready for shipment. One shipment of 42 drums had left the site this morning and personnel expected the NECO truck to return for a second shipment this afternoon (9/15/77). With the exception of two (2) individuals, all ATCOR personnel will leave the site on September 16, 1977. Those remaining will complete the loading and shipping of the remaining drums which, depending upon weather conditions and availability of NECO trucks, should be completed by September 23, 1977. They are planning on two (2) shipments per day to meet this date.

With the exception of instrumentation, all equipment owned by ATCOR will remain on site and locked in the safe in the plant area. Personnel are presently decontaminating equipment and vehicles, used in the removal of waste from the waste area, for release for unrestricted use. Small items and equipment not worth the expenditure for cleanup will be deposited in

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drums, sealed and remain in the waste storage area. The waste area storage shed is now void of any high concentration thorium bearing material; a few piles and drums of rare earth materials containing nominally low amounts of thorium remain in the shed. The shed is practically empty.

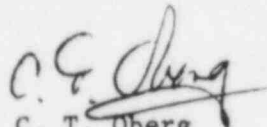
The inspector was informed that Messrs. Levesque and Williams tentatively plan to return to the Kerr-McGee, West Chicago, Illinois site in October to perform tests, surveys, and evaluations as necessary to devise and submit a plan for the ultimate decontamination and disposition of the plant and waste areas.

Additional copies of dosimeter survey and shipping records were obtained.

The inspector arranged with Mr. Williams to hold a management closeout type meeting on Friday, September 16, 1977.

The inspector toured the plant and waste area primeters and observed that some of the radiation hazard signs were missing from the fences. The clear zone exterior to the fence has been maintained and the fence with the barbed wire has been maintained in reasonable condition. Maintenance of these items does not preclude trespass of individual onto the site property because the security guard still reports sighting of people and notification of police.

Brief inspection tours of the subject licensee's facility will continue as necessary to remain cognizant of the status of the facility and of any work in progress.

  
C. T. Oberg  
Radiation Specialist

cc: J. M. Allan