



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

June 3, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Region III Files

THRU: G. T. Lonergan, Chief, Material Radiological
Protection Section

FROM: C. T. Oberg, Radiation Specialist

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

On May 31, 1977, an NRC Region III inspector made a brief 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.

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. No further information was available on the progress of AI No. 5.

No evidence of movement of material was visible in either the plant or waste storage areas. The fence along the east side of the south portion of the plant area was observed to be in need of repair. While touring the west side of the plant, the RIII inspector saw one of the licensee's personnel apparently making measurements of the damaged fence. During discussions with the site personnel, the inspector was informed that the licensee had contracted to repair the fence which should be completed within a week or two.

The inspector reviewed the contracted plant security guard log for the past few months. On May 19, 1977, at about 6:30 p.m., the guard observed boys cutting fence along the west side of the plant, but was not able to catch them. The fence was subsequently repaired. Other notes in the log indicated destruction of posted signs by apparent bullet holes and signs removed, destroyed and thrown around. Site personnel stated they are continuously replacing signs that are either stolen or destroyed.

Licensee's personnel stated that they are still trying to sell the remaining thorium nitrate; if they cannot, it will be buried with the waste material.

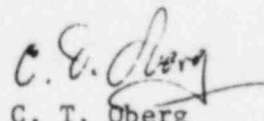
The inspector toured the plant to view electrical switchgear which was to have been shipped out but could not because of overload of the truck. The inspector also made measurements of the equipment with an Eberline PRM-6/HP-190 end window GM instrument and detector. The background averaged about 0.1 mr/hr in the area where this switchgear was located and nothing significantly above background was detected. While checking this switchgear, the inspector observed individuals apparently moving material into the three-car garage on the plant site. When questioned about this, the site personnel stated that the people were employed by Auer and Company and were storing their equipment in the garage to keep it from being stolen. This is precautionary because of the recent incidents of individuals penetrating the security fence as discussed in foregoing paragraphs.

The site personnel also informed the inspector that the air sampler owned by the State Health Department had been relocated again and now on the property of the sheet metal company located just east of the waste area and storage sheds.

When questioned with respect to results of the core boring analyses being performed by ANL personnel, the site personnel stated that they had heard nothing more about the results.

With the exception of the incidents of vandalism, apparent trespassing, storage of personal material (Auer), and switchgear awaiting removal, no other items of concern were apparent.

Brief tours of the licensee's West Chicago facility will continue as necessary to remain cognizant of the status of the facility and equipment.


C. T. Oberg
Radiation Specialist

cc: J. M. Allan