



STATE OF NEW MEXICO

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT DIVISION
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October 23, 1979

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SANTA FE --- The Environmental Improvement Division has amended the order stopping the use of United Nuclear Church Rock tailings impoundment facility to permit an interim operation using the central pond cell and below grade borrow pit for discharge of tailings solutions and solids. The proposal by UNC has been reviewed by the State Engineer and EID. Appropriate controls for use of the central pond and borrow pit have been designed to insure that this operation can be safely accomplished. These controls include a limit on the elevation for liquid levels in the ponds, protection of the tailings line, lighting for critical areas and freeboard gages. A qualified professional engineer responsible for the operation has been required by the State Engineer. It is estimated that about 50 mill operating days can be accomplished during their interim operation.

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United Nuclear Church Rock
Tailings Dam Spill
October 23, 1979

A pre-operational inspection by EID and the State Engineer will be accomplished before resumption of operations is permitted. The company will inform the state when it is ready for such an inspection.

The company is also ordered to undertake an alternative site study which is to be completed within 90 days of the start of interim operations.