

January 28, 1998

Charles A. Judd, President
Envirocare of Utah, Inc.
American Towers Commercial
46 Broadway, Suite 40
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101

SUBJECT: GROUNDWATER MONITORING SYSTEM PERFORMANCE, NRC INSPECTION
REPORT 40-8989/97-01

Dear Mr. Judd:

As you are aware, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission conducted a routine, announced inspection of Envirocare's 11e.(2) disposal facility on October 27-30, 1997. A concern was identified during the inspection regarding the effectiveness of Envirocare's groundwater monitoring system. The details of this concern are described in Section 5.3 c. "Groundwater Monitoring Program Effectiveness" of the above-referenced NRC Inspection Report of January 9, 1998. Briefly, the inspector concluded that monitoring the groundwater through sampling the point of compliance (POC) wells may no longer be an effective method of monitoring the integrity of the 11e.(2) disposal cell liner, because of variations in groundwater elevations induced by past Envirocare construction and run-off management practices. This concern focuses on whether the original environmental protection basis of the 1994 licensing review has changed as the result of Envirocare's practices, and whether additional measures should be initiated to ensure that environmental protection is maintained at Envirocare's facility.

Please provide within 45 days of the date of this letter, either 1) an evaluation of the past and current conditions in the groundwater system, modifications to current practices, and alternative measures that will allow early detection of any licensed constituents of concern that may potentially be released from the 11e.(2) disposal cell; or 2) data and analysis that refute the observations and conclusion of the inspection report and support the effectiveness of the current POC groundwater monitoring program. If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact me at (301) 415-7238 or the NRC Project Manager for the Envirocare site, Mr. Harold Lefevre, at (301) 415-6678.

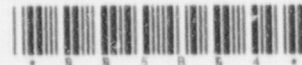
Sincerely,

Original Signed By
Joseph J. Holonich, Chief
Uranium Recovery Branch
Division of Waste Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

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Docket No. 40-8989
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cc: W. Sinclair, UDEQ-DRC



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