

**KERR-McGEE CORPORATION**

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ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT DIVISION

November 19, 1984

EXPRESS MAIL

RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Secretary of the Commission
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

ATTENTION: Docketing and Service Branch

Re: Petition for Rulemaking: EEI and UNWGM Request for
Regulation Governing Disposal of Low Level Radioactively
Contaminated Waste Oils, 49 Federal Register 36653;
September 19, 1984

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Kerr-McGee Corporation submits these comments regarding the petition for rulemaking governing disposal of low level radioactively contaminated waste oils by establishment of a "de minimus" standard. Kerr-McGee supports the petitioners in seeking such a regulatory "de minimus" criterion below which disposal may be carried out without regard to the waste radioactive material content.

Over the years, as the nuclear industry has expanded and measurement techniques have become more sophisticated, regulations for effluent release and waste disposal have become more and more restrictive. In many cases the current rules are without doubt overly restrictive from both a health risk and cost-benefit view. In recognition of this, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) recently recommended that a "de minimus" level of radiation exposure be established. The NRC proposes in its rule (20.401) that this "de minimus" value be 1 mrem/yr for members of the general public. Considering that the typical background radiation dose to an individual is on the order of 100 to 200 mrem/yr and the generally conservative dose calculation methodology used, a 1 mrem/yr contribution is surely "de minimus" and worthy of adoption.

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It is apparent that the EEI and UNWGM in their petition have maintained this conservative approach in instructing a consulting organization (OTHA Incorporated) to develop appropriate disposal scenarios for low level radioactively contaminated waste oils to provide the conservative 1 mrem/yr maximum exposure criterion. This "de minimus" concept is not intended to ease the regulatory burden of the industry in terms of radiological sampling but rather to provide effective and appropriate disposal means for materials that are now subject to onerous and unjustified regulation in relation to health risk.

Kerr-McGee fully supports the establishment of regulations encompassing the "de minimus" concept and encourages the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to issue the current petition for rulemaking.

Sincerely,

Edwin J. Stauter
for J.C. Stauter, Director
Nuclear Licensing & Regulation