

From: "Huff, Mary" <HuffM@fleishman.com>  
To: "secy@nrc.gov" <secy@nrc.gov>  
Date: Mon, Dec 20, 1999 2:45 PM

DOCKETED  
USNRC

'99 DEC 21 A7:21

NRC Chairman Richard Meserve  
Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff  
US NRC  
Washington, DC 20555

OFF  
ADJ

Dear Chairman:

The following opinion piece in the Atlanta Journal Constitution says it all. I am asking you to veto the idea of the NRC selling radioactive metals to the scrap metal industry. Did none of you read the headlines a few years back about thousands of hazardous-material contaminated sites being "cleaned up?" The dirt from those sites ended up in the hands of unscrupulous haulers who used them as landfill for children's playgrounds, etc. This didn't become apparent until larger than would be expected numbers of children living in those areas were diagnosed with leukemia and other cancers.

Did none of you read the headlines about the needles and syringes and other human waste from hospitals ending up on the beaches of New York and other locations? How could those things have happen? Independent waste haulers who didn't care what happened after they dumped their loads.

Even if you plan for provisions about how these materials are recycled and what items are permissible, you know there is no way to adequately monitor for compliance. Why would the scrap metal industry police itself any better than the waste haulers did?

I hope there is a provision in our laws to form a class action suit against the NRC if it goes ahead with this plan. However, the money won't nearly pay for the nightmares that will stem from radioactive cookware, plumbing, concrete, children's toys and who knows what else.

I understand and appreciate the dilemma you're facing. Please ask the American people to help you find another solution.

Sincerely,  
Mary A. Huff  
Atlanta, GA

These opinions may or may not necessarily reflect those of my client, whose email I am using to send this message.

</>

<<http://ad.doubleclick.net/jump/cim.accatl/partners/ajc;sz=468x60;tile=7;ord=OF5-jMCo@QIAAG4I8aA?>>

Monday \* December 20

AccessAtlanta Now </>

In Money <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/business>> : 18 'Uncharitable Charities' exposed

<<http://ad.doubleclick.net/jump/cim.accatl.text/partners/ajc;sz=140x60;tile=1;rr=1;pg=partners/ajc;ord=OF5-jMCo@QIAAG4I8aA?>>

<<http://ad.doubleclick.net/jump/cim.accatl.text/partners/ajc;sz=140x60;tile=2;rr=2;pg=partners/ajc;ord=OF5-jMCo@QIAAG4I8aA?>>

related sections

Perspective

<<http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/ajc/epaper/editions/sunday/perspective.html>>

ajc.com links

News@atlanta <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/ajc/newsatlanta/>>

AccessAtlanta

Today's debate

Express yourself! <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/forums/>>

People & Chat

Ask the opinion <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/forums/>> of others about your community

Join a chat <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/chat/>> and talk live with residents in metro Atlanta

Get Connected

Build a group site <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/groups/>>

Build a personal site

<<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/chat/homepages.html>>

Join a Forum

Your Turn <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/forums/yourturn.html>>

Politics <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/forums/politics.html>>

Thinking Right

<<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/forums/thinkingright.html>>  
Clark Howard <[http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/clarkhoward/msg\\_boards/](http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/clarkhoward/msg_boards/)>

Atlanta Drivers <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/forums/driving.html>>

Bill Clinton <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/forums/clinton.html>>

Gun Control <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/community/forums/guns.html>>

Sports <<http://www.accessatlanta.com/sports/discussion/index.html>>

Constitution: Radioactive contamination

A bad plan: Nuclear Regulatory Commission wants to start putting  
contaminants in everyday items.

Sara Barczak - Special

Monday \* December 20

Soon our homes could become radioactively contaminated, and we wouldn't even  
know it.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Department of Energy would like to  
cut the costs of closing down all those old commercial nuclear power plants  
and nuclear weapons facilities by selling massive amounts of radioactive  
metals to the scrap metal industry. Sounds like the NRC and DOE finally  
understand how to recycle and save pennies, right?

Wrong. NRC's "recycle" and "reuse" concept would introduce radioactive  
metals, without our permission, into thousands of everyday items: pots and  
pans, children's braces, toys, pet car carriers, belt buckles and zippers,  
even the furniture we sit on. And the NRC isn't just looking at metals; it  
wants to recycle everything it can from these nuclear facilities ---  
radioactively contaminated plastics, soils, concretes and more.

The NRC is currently determining what level of radioactivity these raw  
materials can contain --- essentially deciding how much exposure our  
families can handle. This level could be equivalent to an extra X-ray per  
year or more. Doesn't sound too bad, does it? But keep in mind that we could  
receive these radiation donations courtesy of the NRC from many products for  
extended periods of time throughout the year. We could receive doses of  
radiation from our cars, the rings on our fingers, the file cabinets next to  
our desks and the utensils at the diner. Should we really be worried about  
radiation we didn't ask for?

Well, the NRC is considering radiation doses that, when received over a  
lifetime, could cause fatal cancer in four in 10,000 people, according to  
the NRC's own calculations. With the current U.S. population hovering above  
270 million, that translates to more than 108,000 additional deaths.

A generally accepted scientific fact is that there is no totally safe dose  
of radiation. Dr. Karl Morgan, the father of radiological health physics,  
said, "There is no safe level of exposure and there is no dose of radiation

so low that the risk of a malignancy is zero." It is unacceptable for the NRC to debate doses that could result in the loss of lives.

The Steel Manufacturers Association has already expressed deep concern about the additional radiation, especially because nationwide more than 2 million to 3 million tons of radioactive scrap will head its way under the NRC's plans.

The DOE wants to allow contractors to release scrap metal into the stream of commerce, where all signs of the scrap's origins, such as labeling, are removed. The SMA's 1999 Public Policy Statement said, "(Our) companies oppose the release of contaminated scrap and have zero tolerance for acceptance of radioactive material. Furthermore, melting radioactive scrap could threaten worker safety and health, consumers and the environment." SMA member companies have already spent millions of dollars on sensitive radiation detectors at their mills to prevent contamination. Their sensors have already been triggered, mostly by contaminated foreign steel, and shipments have been returned. Case-by-case DOE releases have occurred despite public opposition. More than 1 million pounds of radioactive metals have been released into the marketplace from several closed nuclear operations buildings at Oak Ridge, Tenn. The proposed new rules would legalize the routine release of massive amounts of radioactive materials. Even the current, unsafe case-by-case release procedures would no longer be necessary.

How can the NRC allow further radioactive contamination of the public --- you and me, even our children --- without us knowing about it? The public comment period for the proposed new rules ends Dec. 22 and gives all of us an extremely brief chance to tell the NRC how we feel about radiation contaminating our daily household items. The impact of this rule is global and long-term in its effect on people and the environment. The NRC should carefully isolate these materials. Additionally, the NRC should extend the deadline for public comment to allow for a fair evaluation of its proposal. Mail your comments by Dec. 22 to NRC Chairman Richard Meserve, Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff, U.S. NRC, Washington, DC 20555; fax to 301-415-1101 or e-mail [secy@nrc.gov](mailto:secy@nrc.gov).

For more information on the Internet, go to <http://www.nirs.org>.

Sara Barczak of Atlanta is an organizer with the nonprofit utility watchdog, Campaign for a Prosperous Georgia.

page1/ A-section

<<http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/ajc/epaper/editions/today/>> | local news

<[http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/ajc/epaper/editions/today/local\\_news.html](http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/ajc/epaper/editions/today/local_news.html)> | sports

<<http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/ajc/epaper/editions/today/sports.html>> | business

<<http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/ajc/epaper/editions/today/business.html>> | opinion

<<http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/ajc/epaper/editions/today/opinion.html>>

|> | living

<<http://www.accessatlanta.com/partners/ajc/epaper/editions/today/living.html>

> | classifieds <<http://www.atlantaclassifieds.com/>>

AJC Newspaper Online brought to you in partnership with AccessAtlanta </>

© 1999 Cox Interactive Media <<http://www.cimedia.com>>