



Department of Energy
Albuquerque Operations Office
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October 24, 2000

Lieutenant Colonel Bruce Elliott
Commander
Iowa Army Ammunition Plant
17571 State Highway 79
Middletown, IA 52638

Dear Colonel Elliott:

The Department of Energy (DOE) has been working with the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant (IAAAP) since August 1999 on a variety of issues first raised by Senator Harkin. Since that time, the DOE has participated in public meetings, undertaken worker health initiatives, and conducted a radiological survey at Line 1. Additionally, DOE determined that Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) activities conducted at the IAAAP are eligible under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) managed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The support provided by the IAAAP has enabled the DOE to respond to the letter and spirit of Senator Harkin's initial request to Secretary Richardson.

The three parts of the DOE's involvement at the IAAAP were a historical document review; worker health programs; and survey of potential radiological contamination due to former AEC activities.

In regards to the historical records review, DOE has performed an extensive search of its archives and will continue to cooperate in this regard. I believe that further DOE/Army teaming is required here, as certain records relating to the radiological contamination of the AEC facilities are in the possession of the Army, or the USACE.

The second area relates to worker health programs, which are currently being conducted by DOE in conjunction with the University of Iowa.

The third area relates to the commitment made by Secretary Richardson in a public meeting at Burlington, Iowa, on January 6, 2000. The Secretary committed to perform a limited radiological survey at the AEC areas of the IAAAP to assess the potential for a public health threat due to residual contamination. Public concerns were raised since the AEC areas of the Plant had not undergone radiological environmental remediation efforts since 1975. The DOE worked with the Army, the Iowa Department of Public Health, and the USACE in designing a survey, which would fulfill our commitment. In doing so, we engaged in extensive technical discussions to develop a survey which would fulfill the DOE's commitment while also providing assistance to the IAAAP in fulfilling its own environmental obligations.



Under the DOE's direction, Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) conducted a survey of selected IAAAP buildings on Line 1 and C Yard in early June 2000. Preliminary results from the survey indicated that while a very small amount of residual radioactive contamination was identified in three areas of Line 1, there were no immediate radiological threats to human health or the environment in the buildings surveyed. We anticipate that a draft report on the buildings survey will be completed and available for review by the Army by the end of October. A final report will be issued upon evaluation and incorporation of comments.

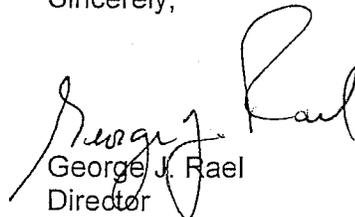
DOE was planning to conduct a radiological scoping survey at Firing Site 12 in August 2000. However, after considerable discussion with several IAAAP stakeholders including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Iowa Department of Public Health, and the Army, we believe that a consensus has been reached that conducting a radiological scoping survey of Firing Site 12 is not the most cost effective approach for a number of reasons. Firstly, due to the complex nature of IAAAP it would be more cost effective to do a comprehensive data gathering and survey effort, as planned by the Army and the EPA. This approach will more directly address the Army's responsibilities under the Federal Facilities Agreement. Secondly, the DOE referred the IAAAP to FUSRAP on March 31, 2000. USACE administers the FUSRAP Program, and they are currently conducting a comprehensive review of all AEC activities at IAAAP to determine both radiological and non-radiological contaminants of concern.

This approach combines our collective interests in the environmental remediation of the IAAAP. In light of the desire of the stakeholders to employ a comprehensive approach to the environmental characterization of AEC activities at IAAAP, coupled with the fact that the FUSRAP Program is planning to fully participate in this process, the value added by the radiological scoping survey of Firing Site 12 is diminished. Therefore, as a result of these events, the DOE is planning to forego the planned radiological scoping survey of Firing Site 12.

However, we remain committed to determining the potential impacts to the environment and the public health as a result of AEC operations and plan to directly support FUSRAP in this regard in a number of ways. These include; (1) issuing draft and final reports on our survey of IAAAP buildings, (2) providing information on AEC operations and their potential environmental implications, and, (3) providing technical assistance as requested.

We appreciate the support that you and your staff have provided in completing our efforts to date and look forward to working with FUSRAP on items and issues related to AEC operations at IAAAP.

Sincerely,



George J. Rael
Director

Environmental Restoration Division

cc:

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- USACE
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D. Site (Optional):

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E. Area (Optional): _____

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N. Recipient(s): Lt. Col. E. Mott O. Recipient(s) Company: USACE

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