



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
BUFFALO DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
1776 NIAGARA STREET
BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14207-3199

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF
CELRB-PM-F

February 27, 2001

[REDACTED], Director
Center for Environmental Health
New York State Department of Health
547 River Street
Troy, NY 12180

Dear [REDACTED]:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) is currently conducting a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) of the Town of Tonawanda Landfill in Tonawanda, New York, under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP). FUSRAP was established in 1974 to address radioactive contamination resulting from activities conducted by the Manhattan Engineer District (MED) or Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), in support of the nation's early atomic energy program. Previous investigations by the Department of Energy (DOE) in 1990 and 1991 detected elevated levels of radium, uranium and thorium, similar to the byproduct from uranium ore processing, in the Town of Tonawanda Landfill. Based on these findings, the DOE inducted the Landfill into FUSRAP in 1992. Management of FUSRAP was subsequently transferred from the Department of Energy (DOE) to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1997. The COE is currently conducting an RI/FS to determine the extent of contamination in the Landfill and to develop and evaluate alternatives for addressing the contamination.

During review of project documents and discussions with the Town of Tonawanda, it has come to our attention that portions of the Landfill are contaminated with americium-241 (Am-241), resulting from discharge from a former smoke detector manufacturing company, EAD Metallurgical, Inc. The Town has indicated that they have been given permission by the State of New York to cap the Am-241 in place when the Landfill is closed. This is confirmed by a letter to the Town from [REDACTED] of the New York State Department of Health, dated April 10, 1989, indicating approval of the Town's plan by the New York State Task Force (see attached).

We are interested in any information you can provide us on how the Task Force made the determination that capping the Am-241 in place is the acceptable and appropriate remedial response. As part of our RI/FS, the COE must evaluate remedial alternatives for the FUSRAP contamination, of which capping may be one, for their protectiveness of human health and the environment and other criteria. We are hoping that we may be able to streamline our process by using existing information and following a similar approach to that used by the Task Force.

Examples of information which will assist our process are fate and transport evaluations, risk assessments, radiological dose determinations for future expected land users, design requirements for the proposed cap or any other information which New York State considered prior to concluding the Am-241 contamination could be safely capped in place. Also please provide any environmental monitoring data which has been collected since 1989 which will assist with our investigation.

If you have any questions, feel free to call me at (716) 879-4433, or the Tonawanda Landfill Project Engineer, [REDACTED], at (716) 879-4287. Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Project Manager

CC:

[REDACTED] Town of Tonawanda
[REDACTED], Town of Tonawanda