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MARK E. WEIDLER
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EDGAR T. THORNTON, III
DEPUTY SECRETARY

February 27, 1996

Victor J. Sgobba
U.S. General Accounting Office
Suite 201
111 Massachusetts Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20001-1461

Dear Mr. Sgobba:

This letter is in response to your February 26, 1996 request to obtain updated information on the status of DOE's application for a RCRA permit for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). I have enclosed the following information to fulfill your request:

- a 3 1/2" diskette containing WordPerfect 5.2 files detailing NMED's requests for information and DOE's responses
- hardcopies of pertinent correspondence
- a copy of the 2/12/96 article in the Albuquerque Journal North discussing the WIPP permit application
- a copy of the paper I will be presenting at the upcoming NM Conference on the Environment, discussing the permitting process
- the current (12/8/95) NMED WIPP permitting schedule

Please note the schedule will be revised once we finally issue the Notice of Deficiency (NOD) and determine the time frame for DOE to respond. I expect the NOD will be issued during the first week in March, and DOE may be given between thirty and sixty days to respond. Thus, the dates on the current permitting schedule may slip by three to seven weeks.

I will include you as a recipient of the NOD. If I can be of further help, please call or send me e-mail at steve.zappe@eidhub.state.nm.us. Also, if at any time you wish to examine any documents in the WIPP administrative record, they are available in my office for public review.

Sincerely,

Steve Zappe, RCRA Permits Program
Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau

cc: Benito Garcia, HRMB Chief
Barbara Hoditschek, HRMB
WIPP File - Red '96

Enclosures



MESSAGE SCAN FOR STEVE ZAPPE

To steve.zappe@eidhub.nmenv.state.nm.us:smtp

From: sgobbav.rced@mailgateway.gao.gov:smtp

Postmark: Feb 26,96 8:20 AM Delivered: Feb 26,96 8:20 AM

Subject: WIPP New Mexico RCRA Permit

Steve:

As part of GAO's ongoing review on the WIPP program (we had met with the Secretary, Benito Garcia, et. al. about this review last June), we would like to obtain updated information on the status of DOE's application to the State of New Mexico for a Part B RCRA permit RCRA. Per our phone conversation today, you had informed me that electronic (Wordperfect) documents were available concerning the State's three requests for information back in November and DOE's subsequent responses to those requests. I respectfully request to receive copies of this material.

Also, I would appreciate any recent press releases that your Department has issued concerning the part B application and the state's review (if applicable). Also, when available, please send me a copy of the Notice of Deficiency that you plan to send to DOE concerning its application and any accompanying information.

Finally, can you provide me with a current estimate of the State's timetable for sending the notice of deficiency to DOE and for completing its review of DOE's application and making a determination on the WIPP RCRA permit?

Please send this information to me at your earliest possible time. My mailing address is as follows:

Victor J. Sgobba
U.S. General Accounting Office
Suite 201
111 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20001-1461

Many thanks for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Victor J. Sgobba Email: sgobbav.rced@gao.gov

Phone no. (202) 512-6937