



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

ANITA S. CURRAN, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

April 30, 1979

U.S.E.P.A. Radiation Branch
26 Federal Plaza, Room 9079
New York, N. Y. 10007


Attention: Miss Feldman;

Gentlemen:

In accordance with your request to Calvin E. Weber, P.E., Assistant Commissioner of Health for Environmental Quality, I am forwarding a copy of a report prepared by him concerning a radiation survey conducted in the vicinity of the former Canadian Radium and Uranium Corporation plant on Railroad Avenue in the Village of Mount Kisco, Westchester County, New York.

Please transmit any comments you may have regarding this matter directly to Mr. Weber.

Very truly yours,


Anita S. Curran, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner of Health

ASC:rx

cc: Sherwood Davies, P.E.
Tom Cashman
C.E.Weber, P.E.
file

REPORT ON SURVEY IN VICINITY OF FORMER
CANADIAN RADIUM AND URANIUM CORPORATION
PLANT, KISCO AVENUE, VILLAGE OF MOUNT
KISCO, WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NEW YORK

BACKGROUND

The Canadian Radium and Uranium Corporation operated a facility at 69 Kisco Avenue, Mount Kisco, N. Y. where old instrument and watch dials and other materials containing radium were processed to recover the radium.

The firm discontinued its radium recovery operations sometime prior to 1966 and decontaminated the building and premises under supervision of the New York State Department of Labor.

In November and December 1966 further decontamination was done and the building was demolished as part of the Village of Mount Kisco Urban Renewal Project. Such decontamination and demolition was conducted under supervision of representatives of Isotopes, Inc., the prime demolition contractor and was coordinated by representatives of the New York State Departments of Labor and Health and the Westchester County Department of Health with technical and laboratory support from the United States Public Health Service.

Certain materials considered too contaminated for burial at the Croton Point Sanitary Landfill, the authorized burial site for the demolition debris and earth from the yard, was placed in sealed drums and turned over to Nuclear Diagnostic Laboratories of Peekskill, New York, for disposal. The demolished building and contaminated earth from the yard and immediate area was hauled to Croton Point and buried.

In early April 1979, Ruth Boice, a reporter for the Patent Trader, in response to an anonymous tip that radiation might be found in the vicinity of the former plant, rented a geiger counter from Nuclear Diagnostics Laboratories and surveyed the area of Kisco Avenue and Railroad Avenue, Mount Kisco. She found readings close to the old freight station on Railroad Avenue, in two areas, of 0.3 and 0.35 millirems per hour. Ms. Boice published a story in the April 5, 1979 edition of the Patent Trader (copy attached) and reported her findings to the New York State Departments of Health and Environmental Conservation and the Westchester County Department of Health.

SURVEY

On April 20, 1979, C. E. Weber, P.E., Assistant Commissioner of Health for Environmental Quality, in company with Ms. Boice and Joseph Bierwith, P.E., Village Engineer, visited the area and took radiation measurements. At various times during the period 8:15 AM to approximately 12:30 PM, the Village Manager, Building Inspector, several Village Trustees, a reporter, several photographers and five television crews were at the site. Ms. Boice and Messrs. Weber and Bierwith were interviewed.

Readings were taken with a Thyac III Victoreen Mod. 490, Ser. #255 Geiger counter with a capped end window probe and an Eberline Instrument Corp., Ser. #4644 Geiger counter, the latter borrowed from the New York State Department of Health.

An initial scan was made by slowly walking the area within a fence at the southerly end of an old wood freight building and easterly of the L.B. Richards lumber yard. Both instruments were held approximately three feet above the ground. Readings obtained

varied from background (0.015 mrem/hr.) to 0.35 mrem/hr. This data was not recorded. Further readings were taken at various locations in the fenced area based on the initial scan. The readings obtained are shown on attached tables 1 and 2. The dose rates varied from 0.015 mrem/hr. at 3 feet above the ground to 0.42 mrem/hr. at approximately 1 inch above the ground at one point. Dose rates above 0.25 mrem/hr. were found in an area of approximately one square yard approximately 4 paces westerly of the concrete pavement and approximately 7 paces northerly of the southern boundary fence.

The approximate locations of dose rate measurements are shown on Figure 1. Dose rates for locations 1 thru 17, as obtained 3 ft. above ground, are plotted on Figure 2.

The areas to the north and south of the old freight building were surveyed by walking the areas. Much of the earth has been moved due to construction. Former landmarks, such as sanitary sewer manholes, were not present having been removed during construction since 1966. Dose rates obtained approximately 3 feet above ground were in the range of 0.015 mrem/hr. to 0.05 mrem/hr.

Based on the surveys made, the highest dose rates were found in a small portion of a fenced in area southerly of the old wood freight station on Railroad Avenue and easterly of the L.B.Richards lumber yard. All of the higher dose rates were found in areas covered by soil and vegetative growth.

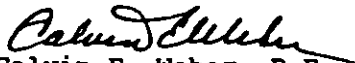
DISCUSSION

The highest dose rates were found in an area surrounded by a high chain link fence with a locked gate. The fenced in area had the appearance of not being used for some time as evidenced by the presence of high grass and dead weeds, rotting wooden pallets and other debris. The area within the fence does not appear to be frequented by the public. The area outside of the fence is one that would not be frequented by the public and which has that appearance.

Dose rates obtained within the fenced area decrease as the fence is approached and are at background or only slightly above background outside the fence.

Review of the data indicates that there is no public health hazard to the public passing the fenced in area, to persons working in buildings adjacent to the area or to persons living across the railroad tracks to the east, from the dose rates found.

The information obtained during the survey will be forwarded to the New York State Departments of Health and Environmental Conservation for their review prior to consultation to determine what, if anything, needs to be done concerning the area where highest dose rates were found.


Calvin E. Weber, P.E.
Assistant Commissioner of Health
For Environmental Quality

April 25, 1979