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North Carolina Department of Human Resources
Division of Facility Services
P. O. Box 12200 • Raleigh, N. C. 27605-2200

James G. Martin, Governor
Phillip J. Kirk, Jr., Secretary

I. O. Wilkerson, Jr., Director
Telephone (919) 733-2342

MEMORANDUM

TO: William L. Meyer, Head
Solid & Hazardous Waste Management Branch
Division of Health Services

FROM: *mf* Richard M. Fry, Deputy Chief
Radiation Protection Section

ok wlm

DATE: October 4, 1985

SUBJECT: POLONIUM-210 DISPOSAL
Oneida Molded Plastics Corporation
Mr. N. Jeffrey Smith, General Manager
Highway 70 West, Clayton, NC 27520
Phone No: 919/553-6151

On September 17, 1985 we were notified by one of our general licensees, Oneida Molded Plastics Corporation of Clayton, NC that one of their static eliminators obtained from 3M Company contained in an air gun had apparently been inadvertently placed in the trash and buried at the Johnston County Landfill located off Highway-210 approximately five miles West of Smithfield, North Carolina.

At the time the source was lost, it contained about 2.5 millicuries of Polonium-210. Since this material has a relatively short half-life of 138 days, it would be expected to decay to background levels in about two and one-half years. This fact, combined with the extremely stable, nonleachable form of the source (ceramic microspheres) makes the risks associated with leaving this source in the landfill very small.

New control procedures have been established by the company to reduce the possibility of a reoccurrence of this type of accident.

I wanted to provide you with this information so that you would be aware of this event and that measures have already been taken to prevent a similar reoccurrence.

cc: Cecil B. Brown, Head
Radioactive Materials Branch