



97-0002948

**Department of Energy**  
Washington, DC 20585

18 September 1997

RECEIVED  
97 SEP 19 PM 2:45  
DNF SAFETY BOARD

The Honorable John T. Conway  
Chairman  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board  
625 Indiana Avenue, NW  
Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I want to strongly communicate our resolve to meet all Recommendation 94-1 commitments. I take these commitments very seriously and hold my staff and contractors accountable for their completion. Unfortunately, our commitment to begin stabilization of high risk salts by pyrochemical oxidation at Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site will be missed by approximately eight weeks. I expect this activity to commence no later than October 31, 1997. Our overall commitment to complete all of the Recommendation 94-1 Implementation Plan deliverables will be met.

As the Rocky Flats Program Office already discussed with your staff, the missed milestone (Implementation Plan milestone 3.3-012A, due August 31, 1997) is due to delays in strip-out and construction and equipment deficiencies identified during system operability testing. As a result of these delays, the site will not be able to complete the milestone until subsequent completion of a readiness assessment in October 1997. Completion of the proposed Implementation Plan milestones to complete stabilization of high-risk salts (6,000 kg by January 1999 and additional 4,000 kg by September 1999) and to complete stabilization of all salt residues by July 2001 are not expected to be impacted by this delay.

I intend to closely track progress in meeting our commitments at the Rocky Flats. If you have further questions, please contact me or have a member of your staff contact Mr. John C. Tseng, Acting Director, Nuclear Materials Stabilization Task Group, at (202) 586-0383.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alvin L. Alm".

Alvin L. Alm  
Assistant Secretary