



Rockwell International

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ROCKETDYNE AMENDS NRC LICENSE APPLICATION AND PLANS TO CLOSE DOWN SANTA SUSANA 'HOT LAB'

CANOGA PARK, Ca. (October 20, 1989) - The Rocketdyne Division of Rockwell International today announced that it is amending its application for a renewal of its Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) License to process nuclear material in its "Hot Lab" located at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL).

The original application requested a ten year extension of the NRC license. The amendment requests the license remain in effect only through 30 October 1990 and will significantly reduce the amount of radioactive material permitted in the facility. This will permit the company to complete current work in progress and prepare and submit to the NRC a plan for the decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) of the facility.

The amount of radioactivity to be handled in the "hot lab" under the revised permit will be significantly less than that found in a typical neighborhood hospital radiation therapy unit.

In making this announcement, Rocketdyne President Bob Paster noted that "Rockwell's involvement in nuclear activities at SSFL has declined substantially in recent years as DOE has shifted its emphasis on reactor development away from Liquid Metal Fast Breeder Reactors, Rocketdyne's historical area of expertise, and toward Light Water Reactors."

This decision is not expected to result in the loss of jobs for Rocketdyne employees working in the "hot lab" as they will be reassigned when current tasks are completed. The impact on the business base of the Division will be negligible as almost all of the Division's "hot lab" work was completed in 1986.

Paster also noted that "in recent months there have been expressions of serious concern from the surrounding community about our nuclear work at SSFL. While the "hot lab" poses no threat to safety, health or the environment, we hope closure of the facility will allay concerns and will assure the public of our commitment to the community in which we live and work."

Rockwell International is a \$12 billion multi-industry company applying advanced technology to a wide range of products in its aerospace, electronics, automotive and graphics businesses.

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TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF INCIDENTS OR RELEASES
(CHEMICAL AND RADIOLOGICAL CONTAMINATION INCIDENTS OR RELEASES AT SSFL [WITH
RESPECT TO ACTIVITIES PURSUANT TO LICENSE SNM-21 OR WITH RESPECT TO DOE
ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN AREA IV OR IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO LICENSED ACTIVITIES] SINCE 1969.)

Date(s)	Substance(s)/Amount(s)	Root Cause(s)	Remedial Action/Date	Reference
2-16-89	Sodium Hydroxide in water solution - 10-20 gal. (1 qt. leaked from berm to ground on-site)	Operator error failed to secure hose	Above ground tank usage terminated, tank removed ~ 3-8-89	RD-89-1-T133-89-1
9-23-88	Sodium Hydroxide in water solution - 60 gal.	Improper material selection by designer. PVC pipe rupture	Replaced with steel drain pipe ~ 12-16-88	RD-88-1-T133-88-1
6-20-88	20% Sulfuric Acid solution 270 gallons	Material incompatibility neoprene gasket on bulkhead fitting failed ~ 6-22-88	use viton or teflon gaskets to prevent material incompatibility ~ 8-12-88	NCR#3298
11/27/87	Sodium metal fire 6-30 gallons	Inadequate procedure accidental release during routine sampling procedure	Procedure revised 1-5-88	Reported to National Response Center (Report#14969) Rockwell Ltr.No. 88RC00149
5-29-86	Caustic/water solution 10-100 gallons	procedure error tank overflow	Procedure corrected. Spill neutralized with citric acid to pH7 ~ 6-10-86	Unusual occurrence Report 6-10-86
5-13-86	Mercury/2oz	Operator error broken manometer	Operator counseled. Mercury collected for recycling.~ 5-13-86	Environmental non-conformance investigation 5-13-86
2-18-86	Sodium Hydroxide in water solution ~ 1000 gal (approx.200 lbs sodium in sodium hydroxide solution.	Material defect combined with operator error in not recognizing fitting distortion when inserting plug.	Drain permanently sealed. ~ 4-1-86	RD-86-1-SFD-86-1

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Date(s)	Substance(s)/Amount(s)	Root Cause(s)	Remedial Action/Dates Action/Report	Reference
9-26-85	Sodium Hydroxide water solution approximately 100 gals.	Material failure in sump drain line expansion plug.	Replaced plug and increased plug inspection frequency ~ 10-9-85	RD-85-1-SFMP-85-1
8-14-85	Sodium. Estim. 10 lb	Inadequate procedure and operator error. Over-pressurization of EM pump throat due to blockage by frozen sodium during preheat.	Replaced pump. Improved trace heat system. Revised pre-heat procedure. Counseled operators. ~ 12-13-85	UOR ETEC-85-05 032-85-01
4-13-84	1500 gallons caustic water solution	Incompatible material faulty drain line gasket	Use viton or teflon gaskets to prevent material incompatibility ~ 4-27-84	IL. summary of NaOH spill at B133 R. Rovang P.K. Kleinsmith 4-27-84
7-1-82	Denatured Ethyl Alcohol 500-800 gallons	Lack of periodic inspection. Tank gasket failed	Tank gasket replaced 7-2-82. Periodic inspection added to Procedure.	Environmental non-conformance investigation 7-1-82
1-13-82	Diesel fuel 50-100 gallons	Operator error. Tank overflow during filling operations. Dipstick left off tank.	Contaminated soils removed ~ 1-14-82	Report of non-conforming discharge 1-13-82.

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Date(s)	Substance(s)/Amount(s)	Root Cause(s)	Action/Report	Reference
11-4-81	Sodium ~ 75 pounds	Controller malfunction combined with operator error in not identifying uncapped tube in frozen sodium heel. Incorrectly relied on vacuum test to confirm vessel boundary integrity.	Tube capped. Procedures revised and Contractor/ESG checkout completed prior to operation ~ 1-13-82	ESG-SFST-81-3
5-7-81	Molten Salt Carbonate PDU area estimated at 1000 gal.	Operator error. Gasket & equipment failure	Repair equipment. Spilled liquid into R2A pond. Discharged under NPDES within limits. Temporary 120,000 gal. pond installed for spill containment. ~ 6-2-81	Environmental non-conformance report 5-7-81
5-19-81	Sodium. Approx. 12 lb	Out of specification insulation installed by contractor which caused inter-granular attack (IGA) in 1/2 in. stainless steel piping due to high chlorides.	Piping replaced. Improper insulation removed and replaced. ~ 8-9-82	UOR ETEC-81-05 SPIF-81-01

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Remedial Action/Dates

Date(s)	Substance(s)/Amount(s)	Root Cause(s)	Action/Report	Reference
2-11-80	Sodium bicarbonate solution w/coal ash - 300 gallons.	Abnormal operating condition led to operator error of overfilling storage tank.	Spill cleaned up; however, some released in R2A pond. Spill containment installed. ~ 2-22-80	Report of non-conforming discharge 2-11-80
3-16-79	Molten salt with water - 500-1000 gallons	Inadequate procedure - tank overflow	Procedure revised 3-21-79	Report of non-conforming discharge 3-16-79
4-13-76	Sodium and Na reaction products. 25-50 lb.	Operator error resulting in overfilling of sodium tank.	Revised filling and improved monitoring procedures. ~ 4-19-76	UOR-SCTI-76-1
8-20-75	Sodium and Na reaction products. Approx. 10 lb.	Procedure error resulted in tube plugging and overheating causing tube leak.	Replaced damaged tubes. Revised procedures which resulted in tube blockage. ~ 1-20-76	UOR-SCTI-75-7

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Date(s)	Substance(s)/Amount(s)	Root Cause(s)	Remedial Action/Dates Action/Report	Reference
8-5-72	Sodium. 20-50 lb	Design error resulted in fatigue failure of thermowell	Revised thermowell design and replaced all similar thermowell units. ~ 3-6-74	IPR-SCTI-426
2-26-71	Sodium. 1-2 gal.	Operator error caused overflow of hot trap.	System redesigned and procedures revised ~ 6-8-71	IPR-T06TS-013
9-28-70	Sodium. Approx. 5 gal.	Material failure resulted in crack in bellows on valve stem.	Drained system. Cleaned area and replaced valve. ~ 3-10-71	IPR-LCTL-058
1960's to early 1970's	Drum storage leakage caused hydro carbon soil contamination	Inadequate containment procedures.	Area cleaned up July 1989	DOE survey report
1960's	Disposal of chemical waste including solvents and metals at old sodium burn pit.	Procedural inadequacies	Scheduled for clean up in 1991-1992	DOE Survey Report