

Ms. Aleta Sue Nagy  
228 Gilbert Avenue  
Fairborn, OH 45324

Dear Ms. Nagy:

Thank you for your letter concerning the storage of toxic waste materials in America. This is an important issue to all of us. Congress recognized the potential harm to the environment and human health because of improper storage and disposal of toxic materials many years ago. Because of this concern, Congress passed the Solid Waste Disposal Act in 1976, and included special provisions to regulate the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. Amendments to the Act have strengthened the requirements for handling hazardous waste, particularly with respect to land disposal practices. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and authorized States with hazardous waste programs implement this act.

We want to assure you that our waste programs provide for the safe management and disposal of hazardous waste. In fact, one of the key requirements in our program is that hazardous waste be treated before it is placed in a secure landfill. For certain types of waste--for example, metals bearing wastes-- the treatment of choice is solidification in concrete, not unlike the approach you suggested. In other cases, however, we have concluded that more aggressive technologies-- such as incineration or chemical treatment-- can permanently detoxify the wastes. For these wastes, then, destructive technologies are the treatment method of choice.

You also mention in your letter the need to fence and post sites where hazardous waste is permanently disposed of. Our regulations require that these sites receive permits from EPA or the appropriate state, and these permits must include many of the security features that you identified in your letter.

More information on hazardous waste generation, treatment, storage and disposal can be found on our website for the Office of Solid Waste at <http://www.epa.gov/osw> , and the Agency's Technology and Innovations Office Website at <http://www.epa.gov/swertio1/index.htm>.

We appreciate your thoughts and suggestions for making this a better place for all of us

to live. If you have any questions or additional comments, please contact Ms. Teena Wooten at (703) 308-8751.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth A. Cotsworth, Director  
Office of Solid Waste