

PPC 9553.1986(03)

DISPOSAL OF DRY CLEANING CARTRIDGE FILTERS

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

DEC 11 1986

Honorable Thomas S. Foley
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Foley:

Thank you for October 27, 1986, letter on behalf of your constituent, Mrs. Eleanore Cole. Mrs. Cole is concerned about the regulations governing disposal of dry cleaning cartridge filters containing fluorocarbons.

The fluorocarbon solvent used by Mrs. Cole is probably Valclene, a product commonly used in drycleaning operations. Valclene, which is a trade name, is also known as fluorocarbon 113 or trichlorotrifluoroethane. Trichlorotrifluoroethane is listed as a hazardous waste in 40 CFR Part 261, Subpart D. It has been assigned the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Hazardous Waste Number F002.

As you know, in the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984 (HSWA), Congress required EPA to restrict the land disposal of dioxin-containing and spent solvent wastes by November 8, 1986. These waste streams were singled out for immediate action because of the special hazards they pose when land disposed. Solvents, in particular, easily destroy landfill liners and help to mobilize other hazardous constituents in landfills. Valclene is an F002 solvent. The F002 solvents are among those which the Agency was required to restrict from land disposal by November 8, 1986.

In implementing the land disposal restrictions program, however, EPA is authorized to grant extensions to the effective date of the restrictions if insufficient national alternative treatment capacity exists. EPA is granting a nationwide two-year variance to the effective date for certain solvent wastes due to capacity shortfalls. The solvent wastes which have been granted the variance include:

solvent waste generated by a small quantity generator of 100 to 1000 kilograms of hazardous waste per month, and solvent waste which is a solvent-water mixture containing less than one percent total F001 - F005 solvent constituents or containing less than one percent total organic carbon.

Consequently, any of Mrs. Cole's plants that generate between 100 and 1000 kilograms (220 to 2200 pounds) per month will not be prohibited from land disposal until November 8, 1988. In addition, some plants may fall within the conditional exclusion for generators that generate less than 100 kg (or 220 pounds) of hazardous waste in a calendar month. Under this exclusion, these generators need only ensure that their wastes are managed at legitimate recycling facilities or at facilities permitted, licensed, or registered by the State to manage municipal or industrial solid waste.

EPA is aware of the impact that our regulations, including these land disposal restrictions, will have on small businesses, and we have taken a number of steps to help these businesses cope. Please find enclosed a copy of a new handbook for small business explaining the small quantity generator hazardous waste regulations, and a brief question-and-answer brochure on the land disposal restrictions. Also included is a dry cleaning and laundries "fact sheet" we had developed to assist various industries in identifying their wastes.

The Agency is currently reviewing a rulemaking petition submitted on behalf of the Alliance of Textile Care Associations which seeks to have EPA establish a level of spent solvent below which a drycleaning cartridge filter could be considered nonhazardous. At this time, however, any amount of a listed solvent is considered to be of regulatory concern and a hazardous waste. The Agency hopes to complete an initial review of the petition within the next few weeks. At that time we will either recommend a decision on the petition or request additional information and clarification as necessary.

-3-

I hope this information will be helpful to you in responding to your constituent. If I can be of any further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

J. Winston Porter
Assistant Administrator

Enclosures