

9486.1989(01)

United States Environmental Protection Agency

March 30, 1989

Mr. Mark McNamara
The Australian Gas Light Company
Tynnyson Road Mortlake
P.O. Box 35 Concord NSW 2137

Dear Mr. McNamara:

You recently wrote the Agency requesting information on the Agency's certification process on biotechnological methods for remediation of industrial facilities.

The Agency does not certify remedial technologies associated with cleanup of industrial waste facilities. Instead, the Agency issues regulations that contain performance standards that the remedial technologies must meet. Agency regulatory programs governing remediation of industrial waste facilities base decisions on site-specific or waste-specific conditions, such as types and amounts of wastes present, site environmental conditions and hydrogeology, risks posed by residual wastes, best demonstrated available technologies for treating the wastes, and engineering feasibility. Since no two industrial waste problems are alike, the applicability of remedial treatment technologies varies from site-to-site.

The Agency's Office of Research and Development provides technical support in the area of remedial technologies. The Robert S. Kerr Environmental Research Laboratory in Ada, Oklahoma, is involved with examining biotreatment technologies for remediation of soil and ground-water contamination. Although the Laboratory does not certify biotreatment technologies, they can be of assistance in determining applicability of biotreatment technologies to various industrial waste problems.

Biotreatment is recognized as an emerging remedial technology by the Agency's hazardous waste and underground storage tank programs. Many hydrocarbon spills are treated with in-situ use of naturally occurring organisms. The Agency's

remedial programs do not preclude in-situ use of biotreatment methods, if the methods are shown to be appropriate for the site conditions.

If, during site remediation, off-site treatment of hazardous wastes are needed, standards under the Agency's Land Disposal Restrictions Program are triggered. In general, this program requires that waste be treated according to Best Demonstrated Available Treatment (BDAT) technologies. BDAT is a performance standard generally based on reductions achievable by using some form of incineration, chemical stabilization, or waste water treatment. Biological organisms are generally used in the treatment of dilute liquid waste streams. Typical BDAT standards can be found in the enclosed Federal Register on page 40642. Separate BDAT standards are being developed for contaminated soils.

We have forwarded your letter to Clinton W. Hall, Director, Robert S. Kerr Environmental Research Laboratory, P.O. Box 1198, Ada, Oklahoma, 74820, for follow-up.

Sincerely,

Sylvia K. Lowrance
Director
Office of Solid Waste

Enclosure

cc: Clinton W. Hall, ORD
David Bussard, WMD