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SMALL QUANTITIES OF WASTE GENERATED BY LARGE NUMBERS OF GENERATORS

February 18, 1987

Honorable John Paul Hammerschmidt  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Hammerschmidt:

Thank you for your letter of January 21, 1987, on behalf of your constituent, Mr. Gene Culver. Mr. Culver is concerned about the costs for disposing of the hazardous wastes from his dry cleaning establishment, and a recent increase in charges for the Safety-Kleen service he has been using.

As you know, the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984 (HSWA) to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) directed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to promulgate regulations for small quantity generators of 100 to 1000 kg of hazardous waste per month. Congress directed that, at a minimum, regulations issued by EPA require that: (1) all treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous wastes from 100 to 1000 kg/mo generators occur at facilities with interim status or a RCRA permit; (2) 100 to 1000 kg/mo generators be allowed to store waste on-site for up to 180 days (or 270 days if the waste is to be shipped more than 200 miles) without the need for a permit; and (3) that 100 to 1000 kg/mo generators use a Uniform Hazardous Waste Manifest when shipping their hazardous waste off-site for treatment, storage, or disposal.

In developing these regulations, the Agency attempted to assure protection of human health and the environment while avoiding unreasonable burdens on the large number of small businesses affected by the rules. As a result, the final regulations for small quantity generators of 100 to 1000 kg/mo that went into effect on September 22, 1986, provided some relief from a number of paperwork and recordkeeping requirements applicable to larger generators. In addition, 100 to 1000 kg/mo generators were allowed a longer on-site storage period (180 days as opposed to 90 days) in which to accumulate their waste for more economical shipments off-site. For your reference, I have

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enclosed copies of a handbook we developed to explain these new requirements to affected businesses.

As a result of these new rules, a number of waste management and disposal firms, such as Safety-Kleen., have developed "milk run" programs to serve small quantity generators. State

agencies, local governments, and several trade associations have also recognized the need for innovative, economical, and efficient programs for handling small quantities of waste from a large number of generators. We are encouraging some of these programs through a series of grants awarded under §8001 of RCRA. Some pilot efforts now underway include establishment of periodic "milk runs", transfer stations, and waste exchanges. EPA does not, however, have any authority over private companies pricing structures, which appears to be one of the sources of Mr. Culver's concerns.

In sum, we understand Mr. Culver's concern about the increased costs he faces for properly disposing of his dry cleaning wastes. We hope that, as additional firms enter the small quantity generator market, and as State and local programs evolve, Mr. Culver will be offered a greater variety of waste management plans, and will be able to select one that most economically and appropriately fits his needs.

If I can be of any further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

J. Winston Porter  
Assistant Administrator

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