

[DNFSB LETTERHEAD]

November 25, 1994

The Honorable Thomas P. Grumbly
Assistant Secretary for
Environmental Management
Department of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Mr. Grumbly:

On September 29, 1994, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) forwarded Recommendation 94-4 to the Secretary. This recommendation relates to criticality safety deficiencies at the Oak Ridge Y-12 facility. On October 7, 1994, you and the Associate Deputy Secretary for Field Management issued a memorandum requesting each field and operation office manager to review operations involving criticality safety. This memorandum was issued in part because of a serious criticality infraction that occurred at the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (RFETS) after the Board issued Recommendation 94-4. The DOE site representatives have taken some initial corrective actions and are deciding what additional corrective actions are warranted. Many issues and concerns noted in Recommendation 94-4 are applicable to the RFETS criticality infraction occurrence. The Board believes that the Department of Energy (DOE) should expand its review to specifically evaluate the issues raised in Recommendation 94-4 with respect to this recent occurrence.

Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 2286b(d), the Board requests that DOE provide a report that addresses the issues and concerns raised in Recommendation 94-4 as applicable to the Rocky Flats criticality infraction. Of particular concern is the experience, training, performance of personnel involved, the level of conduct of operations at the site, the root cause of the occurrence, and the corrective actions necessary for any identified deficiencies. The Board requests the above report be submitted within 60 days of receiving this letter. If any further information is needed, please let me know.

Sincerely,

John T. Conway
Chairman

c: The Honorable Tara O'Toole, EH-1
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, EH-6
Dr. Willis Bixby, EM-60
Mr. Mark Silverman, Manager, DOE-RFFO
Mr. Anson Burlingame, EG&G-RF