

**[DOE LETTERHEAD]**

DEC 08 1995

The Honorable John T. Conway  
Chairman  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board  
625 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Suite 700  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Conway:

In response to your letters of June 15, 1995 and July 21, 1995, the Department of Energy began an evaluation of the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of ventilation systems at DOE's plutonium processing and handling facilities.

Preparation of the report has taken longer than anticipated due to the need to resolve certain issues, developed as part of report preparation, prior to submittal of the report to the Board, and to obtain information required to complete the report. As a result, the Department of Energy requires an extension until February 15, 1996, to complete the ventilation system evaluation.

We will continue to keep you and your staff informed of our progress as we continue this important review. If you have any questions, please call me.

Sincerely,

***Thomas P. Grumbly***  
Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management