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August 14, 1986

CONFIDENTIAL

VISTA

Mr. Jerry Banks, P.E.
North Air Emissions Section
Mississippi Department of Natural Resources
Bureau of Pollution Control
P. O. Box 10385
Jackson, MS 39209

Dear Mr. Banks:

On August 8, 1986, I advised Mr. Dwight Wylie by phone of a small release of vinyl chloride to the atmosphere. You were not in the office when I called. This letter provides details of the incident.

The release occurred from 743 reactor at 10:30 a.m. on August 8, 1986. Reactor 742 had just been charged with an experimental formulation as a part of our ongoing quality improvement program. Charging of the experimental batches requires several nonstandard procedures as compared to regular production batches. After completion of the charge to 742 reactor, the panel operator was flushing the suspending agent charge line through 743 reactor which was empty at the time. While this flushing procedure was taking place, the suspending agent valve on 742 reactor opened allowing material in 742 reactor to flow into the suspending agent charge line and into 743 reactor which was open to the atmosphere. The panel operator was watching the sewer bullseye using the TV camera at the time. When he saw the change in flow pattern in the bullseye, he immediately closed the valves on 742 and 743 reactors to stop the release. The duration of the release was only four to five seconds. Calculations indicate the size of the release to be 50 pounds of vinyl chloride.

The suspending agent valve on 742 reactor opened because an interlock to prevent the opening of the valve in this unusual situation was not in place at the time. The need for such an interlock in this situation was not anticipated during the planning of the experimental program. An interlock to prevent a recurrence of this type of a release was installed before another batch was charged.

Sincerely,

R. A. Frohreich

R. A. Frohreich
Director of Environmental Control

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cc: JF, JWW, DWH, VEM, WLM, JCL