

MEMO

TO: Toby and Barbara

FROM: Debbie

DATE: September 21, 1981

RE: Hooker - Telephone call to Pat Lange (208) 526-1756
Re. bubble structures

Pat Lange is with an Idaho company called EG & G. Currently they are acting as prime subcontractors to the Department of Energy, on a disposal facility for radioactive materials. The facility is actually a storage facility which they are currently just digging up and testing in order to determine the current radioactive level.

Mr. Lange called the bubble^{an} "air support structure". There are 2 types of air support structures. The first type is one which utilizes positive pressure. It is made of vinylized fabric. It is the positive pressure structure with which EG & G have had the most experience. They use this structure merely for shelter from environmental elements. This structure is not used to contain environmental contamination.

The second type of structure is called a tension structure. It has arched beams which hold a fabric. The pressure inside is negative. This facility may be used to contain contamination.

I asked Mr. Lange what type of waste the structures are used for and he replied by saying that they are used as temporary facilities by the air force, and also by various industries, ~~also~~ as temporary facilities.

I asked Mr. Lange who made the facilities. He said it was a commercial firm, and he couldn't recall the name off-hand, but that he would call back on Tuesday with the name.

I asked about the size of the structure, i.e. how large could it be made? He said that the manufacturer would be the best one to answer this question, but added that he had seen proposals for a structure 300-400 feet square. He thinks they could be made larger, but he didn't say how large. Their experience has been mostly with the 100 x 100 foot size. He said they don't need them any larger because they just move them around. (He is referring to the positive pressure ones here.)

I asked again about the type of waste materials they are suitable for. Either I kept asking the wrong question, or he just didn't have the answer. He again said that ^{they} ~~fact~~ merely as a weather barrier and also that ~~they~~ ^{EG & G} were only involved in retrieval of radioactive waste out of the ground. He went on to say that with the positive pressure facility, they use a temporary metal building inside the positive

pressure structure, which acts as the protection or ~~the~~ containment facility against the radioactive facility.

I asked again about the tension structure with negative pressure. He said that due to the differential in pressure any contamination stays inside the facility. He says they don't use tension structures because they are not as portable.

I asked Mr. Lange about air monitoring, and he merely said that they do standard air monitoring. I don't think I knew the right questions to ask, and I don't think he had the answers anyway.

I inquired about warranties, and he said that the structures they use are guaranteed up to six years of continued use. He knows that they can also be guaranteed for up to 10 years.

I asked if the EPA had any sort of a policy regarding these structures. His response was merely that their operations were monitored closely by:

1. the state
2. the U.S. geological service
3. EG & G themselves.

So I asked if the government ever had any involvement in deciding the type of technology that would be used in any one particular site, and he replied in the negative - that they were merely concerned about the end result.

When we get ^{their} ~~their~~ names, the commercial firms which manufacture the bubbles will probably be able to provide more specific information. If I don't hear from Mr. Lange by Tuesday, I will call him back.