



Energy  
Communities Alliance  
Local Concerns. National Impact.

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December 2, 2002

Honorable Spencer Abraham  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20585

**Subject: National Security and DOE facilities**

Dear Secretary Abraham:

Over the past three years, Energy Communities Alliance (ECA), the membership organization of local governments adjacent to DOE facilities, has worked with the local government emergency responders adjacent to DOE facilities in an attempt to improve the readiness of emergency responders and their coordination with DOE. DOE headquarters staff has provided support for these activities.

Through these meetings and based upon the experiences of several emergency situations (fires at several sites) local governments have compiled a list of lessons learned and have tried to implement these lessons learned at the various sites. However, there are many issues that are continually ignored that may in the future threaten national security at the sites if they are not addressed— including a need for improved coordination between DOE and local government emergency responders, improved training and improved equipment.

The Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security are both working to coordinate and improve the capabilities of emergency responders adjacent to key national security installations. Congress and the Administration have recognized the critical nature of local emergency responders providing support to federal emergency responders. DOE should be undertaking these same activities. Currently, some DOE sites work closely with the local governments and these can be models for other DOE facilities.

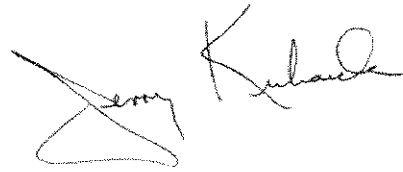
The Senate's Energy and Water Development Appropriation's Bill for FY 2003 recognizes the need for DOE to work closely with local governments. The Senate conference report on the Bill (S. Rpt. 107-220) states:

*"Coordination with local communities-* The Committee recognizes the unique emergency response role carried out by local governments adjacent to Departmental facilities and directs the Department to use available resources to improve local government emergency response capabilities through better communications and stronger coordination of training and response activities."

ECA believes that emergency response is not an issue that can be ignored or moved to a second or third tier issue. I am sure that you agree, the safety of our citizens and our national security facilities is of paramount importance. ECA and its members stand ready to work with the Department to develop solutions to these issues to ensure that the Department and emergency responders adjacent to the DOE facilities are prepared to respond adequately.

Please ask your staff who are responsible for these issues to contact ECA's Executive Director Seth Kirshenberg at (202) 828-2494 to coordinate how DOE and ECA can work together to solve this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Kuhaida". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K".

Jerry Kuhaida, Chair  
Councilman Oak Ridge, TN

cc: Acting Administrator of NNSA, Ambassador Linton F. Brooks,  
Assistant Secretary of EM, Jessie Roberson  
Mayor Thompson, Vice-Chair, ECA, Richland, WA  
Mayor Kevin Phillips, Secretary, ECA, Caliente, NV  
Councilmember Lorraine Anderson, Treasurer, ECA, Arvada, CO  
Councilmember Samantha, Dixon, Immediate Past-Chair, ECA, Westminster, CO  
ECA Board of Directors  
Seth Kirshenberg, Executive Director, ECA