UNITED STEELWORKERS

UNITY AND STRENGTH FOR WORKERS

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Dear Messrs. Victorine, Chomycia, Neibergall and Nightingale:

We are writing to request your participation in a roundtable discussion in Metropolis, IL, preferably in January or early February 2015. There are several community health and safety concerns we would like to discuss with you and a meeting attended by local leaders and elected officials seems prudent. This forum would also offer an opportunity for you to gain insights and information that we believe will be of interest to you. In particular, we would like to focus on the following topics.

You are no doubt aware that Honeywell had a release of UF_6 on October 26, 2014 in the Feeds Material Building, which resulted in a 2 ½ week shutdown. While Honeywell regarded the UF_6 release as a "plant emergency," NRC's investigation of the incident found that it was improperly classified and warranted the more serious emergency designation of "ALERT." Reportedly, the release occurred at 8:24 PM, with Honeywell declaring an "all clear" about 7 hours later at 3:16 AM, October 27, 2014. According to NRC's online Event Report, "Members of the public outside the plant reported a cloud emanating from the building for five minutes before the mitigation spray towers were activated by Honeywell." When UF_6 comes in contact with water or moisture in the air, it breaks down to UO_2F_2 and Hydrogen fluoride (HF). Videos of the "cloud" appeared on the local television news, calling into question Honeywell's assertion that HF did not travel offsite. As you know, HF is one of 77 chemicals covered under EPA's Risk Management Program. EPA, Region 5 has conducted at least 3 RMP investigations at this facility since 2011 during which many violations were cited, including the failure of HF sensors to sound when tested (during both the 2011 and 2012 inspections). This historic fact instills little confidence that HF did not migrate off plant property. Further, some question why NRC, rather than

EPA, evaluated Honeywell's calculations regarding the amount of HF released, subsequent plume estimate, and offsite vegetation analyses.

Groundwater quality is another concern. Three municipal wells supply potable water for the Metropolis community, while some residents use private wells. Groundwater contamination under Honeywell plant property has been documented and bottled drinking water is now supplied to workers; however, employees shower with water they believe is not potable. Since not all drinking fountains and sink faucets have been disabled, it is possible that contract workers and visitors are unknowingly consuming tainted water.

While past industrial practices over several decades have triggered groundwater investigations, deep concern remains about the fate of the four remaining retention ponds containing radioactive calcium fluoride, particularly given the area geology. The ponds, constructed in the 1970's range in depth from 14-16 feet and are each lined with a single EPDM liner—designed to last 20 years. In 1987, a waiver was granted that exempted the company from minimum technology requirements, thus allowing the continued use of a single liner—even though the ponds were known to have leaks at the time the waiver was granted. A condition of the waiver, as well as Honeywell's RCRA permit, required that all ponds be cleaned up by 2020.

However, as you know, rather than remove the contents of the ponds and transfer the hazardous waste for proper disposal, Honeywell desires to "solidify" the waste, leave it in place and cover the ponds. Not only is this of concern to the community, it also violates the company's RCRA permit and the conditions set forth in 1987 waiver. It is even more troubling that NRC conducted an Environmental Assessment that appeared to render a Finding of No Significant Impact. Since NRC's jurisdiction covers radiological hazards, some are questioning their authority to render an opinion on the fate of the ponds that are filled with corrosive hazardous waste.

The Illinois EPA's Bureau of Lands conducted an inspection of the Honeywell facility on March 11, 2014 and subsequently issued a 39 page Violation Notice (M-2014-01008) on July 15, 2014. If possible, we would like a status update regarding resolution of the violations cited.

We thank you in advance for your interest in meeting with us. We believe that a roundtable discussion will be mutually beneficial and we are willing to work with you to find acceptable dates. Please do not hesitate to contact Diane Heminway at 412-417-9078 (dheminway@usw.org) if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Carol Landry

Michael E. Millsap

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