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DISTRICT 29



COMMITTEE:  
ENERGY AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES,  
RANKING MEMBER  
EMPLOYMENT AND  
REGULATORY AFFAIRS

## Arizona House of Representatives Phoenix, Arizona 85007

January 27, 2011

Arizona Department of Environmental Quality  
1110 West Washington Street  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Acting Director Darwin:

We are writing in response to a January 16, 2011 news article in Arizona Daily Sun concerning ADEQ's lack of oversight over the Denison Arizona 1 uranium mine located near the Grand Canyon. As you are well aware, uranium mining in Northern Arizona historically does not have a good reputation. We were hoping that new uranium mining would not repeat their disastrous history, but I am quickly learning this may not be the case.

The Arizona Daily Sun article highlighted some deficiencies by the Department. Most notably, a lack of inspections until almost 9 months after the mine had already been operating. Additional examples include no inspections of the mine below the surface and a lack of follow-up to untimely responses from Denison mines.

It is the mission of ADEQ to protect and enhance public health and the environment by ensuring safe drinking water and reducing the impact of pollutants discharged to surface and groundwater. It is irresponsible of ADEQ to not inspect and mandate 100% compliance from Denison mines. We would respectfully request a briefing on the status of the Denison Arizona 1 mine and their corrections to 4 major violations. We would also like to review a schedule of inspections that have and will occur at the Arizona 1 mine. In addition, we would respectfully request responses to the following questions. Hopefully, ADEQ can provide us with the requested information and answers to our questions by March 1, 2011.

- Has Denison submitted new drawings of the mine's surface operations?
- Has Denison placed pumps in the mine to eliminate water?
- Has a test measuring the permeability of rock been initiated?
- Has defective pond liners been replaced or repaired to prevent groundwater contamination?

We understand that in recent years ADEQ has taken significant cuts to the budget and sweeps of program fees. With these drastic cuts, every department has to streamline their operations and do more with less. But we cannot afford to do less when it comes to our air and water. We need to hold Denison mines accountable. If you have any questions please feel free to contact our offices.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Daniel Patterson in black ink.

Representative Daniel Patterson  
Ranking Member Energy and Natural Resources  
Legislative District 29

Handwritten signature of Senator Jack Jackson Jr. in black ink.

Senator Jack Jackson Jr.  
Legislative District 2

Handwritten signature of Representative Albert Hale in black ink.

Representative Albert Hale  
Legislative District 2

Handwritten signature of Representative Tom Chabin in black ink.

Representative Tom Chabin  
Legislative District 2