

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION X

1200 SIXTH AVENUE  
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98101

MAY 2 1975



REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: M/S 529

Honorable Gordon N. Johnston  
Mayor of Tacoma  
County-City Building  
930 S. Tacoma Avenue  
Tacoma, Washington 98402

Dear Mayor Johnston:

In the last few weeks, public concern has mounted over the problems posed by the emission of potentially dangerous air pollutants from ASARCO's Tacoma smelter. Inquiries about the smelter are being received with increasing frequency at our offices in Seattle. From the calls we have received, it is apparent that there is little public awareness of the complexity and inter-relationships of all the problems associated with air pollutants at the Tacoma complex.

I am sure you share with EPA the recognition that solutions to all problems will not come at once, nor will they be solved by any single government agency. For that matter, equitable environmental controls to safeguard human health will not be attained by the government sector alone. The task requires the cooperation of ASARCO, smelter workers and local residents, not to mention the understanding and support of the public at large.

It is to address this last aspect -- to develop public understanding and support of the general public for EPA and for all parties actively involved in pollution control at ASARCO -- that EPA has scheduled a public informational meeting in Tacoma.

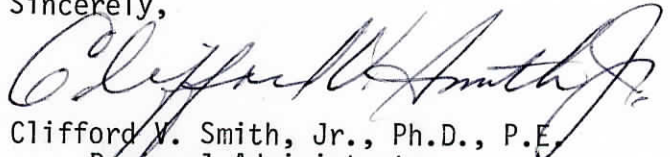
The meeting will be held the entire afternoon and evening of Wednesday, May 21, in Room 006 of McIntyre Hall at the University of Puget Sound campus. A draft of the agenda is attached.

I would very much welcome your testimony at the public meeting. It will enable you, along with other parties we have invited to testify, to discuss the scope of your authority and participation in resolving the ASARCO problems. Such a discussion, held in an open forum, will allow citizens to better understand the mutuality of interests of government, the business sector and all members of the public in what EPA regards as a well-conceived and coordinated effort to tackle the ASARCO issues.

The public, EPA believes, must be made aware of the difficulties that we face. Our activities can be better accepted if citizens can be brought into the decision-making process. We must clearly identify the issues and factor in -- if possible -- concerns that may, up to now, have been unexpressed by the public. Citizens must know what tasks lie ahead and the schedule by which they are to be completed. If, at the May 21 public meeting, we can get these messages across, we will have all made a significant contribution toward establishing a climate of public understanding that will make all our jobs easier in the months that lie ahead.

I look forward to your participation on May 21.

Sincerely,



Clifford W. Smith, Jr., Ph.D., P.E.  
Regional Administrator

Enclosure