



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION I

J.F. KENNEDY FEDERAL BUILDING, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02203-2211

June 11, 1991

Mr. Philip Smith, V.P. Sales & Marketing
Tri-S Incorporated
25 Pinney Street
Ellington, CT 06029

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am responding to your letter sent to the Regional Administrator on March 14, 1991. I would first like to apologize for the delay in issuing a reply to your request. In your letter, you are requesting an EPA determination on whether the fluorescent bulbs that you are bidding for disposal of would be deemed a hazardous waste.

Based on the information outlined in your letter it appears that you are correct in assuming that the bulbs would be a hazardous waste by exhibiting the toxicity characteristic (TC) for mercury at levels in excess of those outlined in 40 C.F.R. § 261.24. You stated that this determination was made by testing a crushed bulb via the TCLP method. This appears to be appropriate protocol, and the applicable EPA waste code would indeed be D009 for this waste.

The fact fluorescent bulbs fail the TC for mercury is consistent with information that is being compiled by EPA at this time. In addition to mercury, levels of cadmium that exceed the regulatory levels for the TC have also been reported. Whether all fluorescent bulbs would be hazardous waste (for mercury or cadmium levels) or not when they are to be disposed of, depends upon the type, manufacturer, and age of the bulbs. In the absence of definitive knowledge of the levels of these metals attributable to each bulb, testing via the TCLP would be the recommended procedure to make that determination. The state of California, in fact, regulates fluorescent bulbs as a hazardous waste.

Therefore, based on your letter, and in the absence of additional data, the fluorescent bulbs should be handled and disposed of as a hazardous waste. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call me at (617) 573-9629.

Sincerely,

John K. Gauthier,
Chemical Engineer
Waste Management Division

