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*Norge Town Cleaners
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August 6, 2001

Robin Brown
Environment Department, Ground Water Bureau
P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Ms. Brown:

This letter is regarding a site visit I did to Norge Town Cleaners, several years ago, probably 1997.

At the time, the Ground Water Bureau was in the process of investigating perchloroethylene (perc) contamination in Espanola. The contamination was believed to come from the Norge Town Cleaners.

I found fairly modern dry cleaning equipment that was supposedly installed in the early 90's. This equipment was equipped with a distillation unit to refine the used perc and a chiller to collect the perc after it had been refined. The only wastes from this type of operation would be lint from the lint trap that still has perc in it and still bottoms. Still Bottoms are sludge left in the unit when distillation of the solvent takes place. It could easily take 6 months to collect one drum full of sludge depending on the quantity of dry cleaning processed.

From the operation I viewed during this visit, it was not apparent that perc had been leaking or was being spilled. In 1997, perc was very expensive running about \$600 per 55 gallon drum. This alone would make it economically feasible to own a newer machine that recycled perc through the distiller and to not spill it on the ground.

It was my opinion at that time that probably the contamination had come from the previous operation that had used older, less efficient dry cleaning machines.

Should you need any other information please contact me at 505-428-2528.

Sincerely,

Debby Brinkerhoff
Manager

Compliance and Technical Assistance Program