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ENTERED



MARK E. WEIDLER
SECRETARY

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DEPUTY SECRETARY

May 27, 1998

David Neleigh, Chief (6PD-N)
U.S. EPA
Region VI
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733

**RE: EPA Prior Notice of NMED's Intent to Approve a Fort Bliss (FB)
Open Detonation Operating Permit Modification**

Dear Mr. Neleigh:

This letter is intended to satisfy the EPA/NMED Workshare Agreement requirement to provide your office ten (10) day notice of RCRA Permit modification. NMED intends to approve FB's proposed Operating Permit modification.

The details of the proposed modification are provided in the attached draft Fact Sheet. NMED has determined that the proposed lessening of sampling requirements makes this a Class II modification. Therefore the NMED is providing a public comment period in addition to the one just completed by FB.

Please advise me of any concerns within ten days or by June 8th. If you do not respond we will proceed with the public notice of our intent to approve.

Sincerely,

Robert S. (Stu) Dinwiddie, Ph.D., Manager
RCRA Permit Management Program

enclosure: Fact Sheet

FACT SHEET
(draft)

---DATE---

Subject: NMED's intent to approve Fort Bliss's request to modify the McGregor Range Open Detonation (OD) Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Operating Permit

Facility Name: U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery Center and Fort Bliss

EPA ID Number: NM4213720101-01

Modification

Request: Principally to reduce compliance monitoring requirements.

Specifically: the deletion of the deep soil boring requirements for compliance sampling; reduction in sampling requirements for the eastern portion of the Unit; provisions for annual instead of semi-annual monitoring based on treatment volumes; clarification of the 24-hour requirement for inspection and sampling to be performed after an OD event; deletion of the analytical requirement for free liquids, ignitability, pH, and PCBs; and reclassification of background sampling locations to outer monitoring points.

Modifications are proposed to occurred to the following portions of the Operating Permit: Module II (General Facility Requirements), Attachment A (Waste Analysis Plan); Attachment F (Closure Plan); Module III (Treatment of Energetic Wastes), Attachment J (Sampling and Analysis Plan). A complete compilation of all added and deleted language is attached.

The request is considered a lessening of permit requirements and therefore the New Mexico Hazardous Waste Management Regulations (20 NMAC 4.1) require considerable opportunity for public comment.

In addition to the changes to the OD Unit Operating Permit, HRMB is proposing to unilaterally add two sites to the HSWA Module; the McGregor Range Fire Training Area and the McGregor Range Former Drum Storage Area.

Type of

Permitted Unit and Activity: The Open Detonation Unit thermally treats pyrotechnics, explosives, and propellant (PEP) that result from the demilitarization of existing stockpiles and off-specification material. The OD Treatment Unit is a manmade excavation approximately 500 ft in diameter and 20 ft deep.

The permittee is required to construct, maintain and operate the OD treatment unit to minimize the possibility of a fire, explosion, or any unplanned, sudden or non-sudden release of hazardous waste to air, soil, or surface water which could threaten human health or the environment.

Type and Quantity of Wastes: The Permittee is allowed to open detonate only those wastes listed in Permit Attachment N and is allowed to open detonate no more than 2,500 pounds of waste munitions per quarter.

Background Information: The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) issued a Hazardous Waste Facility Operating Permit to Fort Bliss in June of 1995 after operating as an OD unit since 1965. The Operating Permit was modified in September, 1995 to provide a more safe approach to determining whether a potentially reactive soil sample could undergo analysis. The Operating Permit was again modified in May 1996 to allow an increase in the amount of wastes that could be treated annually from 1373 to 10,000 pounds net explosive weight.

Document and Associated Correspondence Availability: Copies of the proposed permit modification and associated coorespondence are available for public review weekdays between 8 am and 5 pm at the NMED Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau, 2044-A Galisteo Street, Santa Fe, NM, and during normal business hours at --(address and phone #, possibly information repository)----- Fort Bliss.

Comment Period and Request for Public Hearing: Any person who wants to comment on the proposed decision to approve the permit modificaiton, or who wants to request a public hearing, may do so by submitting written comments or a request to: NMED

Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau, 2044-A Galisteo, Santa Fe, NM 87505, attention: Mr. Stephen Pullen. Any request for hearing shall state the nature of the issues proposed to be raised in the hearing and must include the requestor's name and address. **Only comments and/or requests received by 5:00 pm ----- will be considered.** For further information please call Mr. Stephen Pullen at (505) 827-1558.

Final Decision:

NMED will consider all comments submitted on this issue before formulation of a final decision. NMED will notify FB and each person who submits a written comment during the prescribed period of the final decision or any scheduled public hearing. The final decision will require that activities at the OD Unit be conducted in accordance with the applicable State and Federal laws and FB's operating permit.