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NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

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CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

May 10, 2010

Ms. Vicki G. Hamilton
Chief, Environmental Division
Directorate of Public Work
Bldg 624 Taylor Road
Fort Bliss, TX 79916

RE: APPROVAL WITH DIRECTION
REVISED SUPPLEMENTAL RCRA FACILITY INVESTIGATION
REPORT, SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT UNIT #19, MCGREGOR
RANGE CAMP OXIDATION LAGOON, NOVEMBER 2009
FORT BLISS, NEW MEXICO
EPA ID #NM7572124454
HWB-FB-09-005

Dear Ms. Hamilton:

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) received Fort Bliss's (Permittee) Revised Supplemental RCRA Facility Investigation Report, Solid Waste Management Unit #19, McGregor Range Camp Oxidation Lagoon, November 2009 (Report). NMED hereby issues this approval of the Report with the following directions.

General Comment:

Overall, the Report is disjointed and out of date. It is unclear why more up-to-date screening levels were not applied in the 2009 revision of the report. For example, the report references toxicity reference values from the 2000 version of the NMED Ecological Screening document. Those values were removed from the guidance during a 2008 update. Another example is

NMED Soil Screening Level (SSL) values, shown in Appendix 1 Table 1, that are listed in Revision 1.0 of the guidance dated December 18, 2000. SSL values from a more recent version should have been used. However, NMED conducted its review using the most recent SSLs and arrived at similar conclusions as those reported.

**Specific Comments:**

**Comment 1. Section 2.2.2 Operational History, Page 2-3:**

The Permittee states that all discharge is dispensed into the oxidation lagoon through a 10-inch diameter cast-iron pipe that deposits wastewater and sediment in the center of the lagoon. However, photographs and diagrams indicate that a segment of the discharge pipe is missing. Wastewater and sediment appear to be deposited within 150 feet of the eastern perimeter. The Permittee must describe the discharge pipe correctly in future documents.

**Comment 2. Reporting Limits:**

As discussed in General Comment 2 in the NMED's Notice of Deficiency (NOD) dated June 6, 2005, the reporting limits for several analytes are above the associated screening criteria. In the response to comments, dated November 2009, the Permittee discussed the laboratory's inability to reach a quantitation limit as low as the most conservative ecological benchmarks in salamander tissue. However, the NMED's comment regarding reporting limits was not limited to tissue samples. The Permittee must set data quality objectives with quantitation and reporting limits below evaluation criteria prior to future analyses of any matrix.

**Comment 3. Data Summary Tables:**

Data tables presented in the Report were difficult to review. In future reports, the Permittee must present data summary tables with the following criteria:

- (1) tabulate (summarize) only analytes that were detected above reporting limits (all results, including non-detects, should be reported in the appendices),
- (2) include the method detection limits in the data summary table,
- (3) include the evaluation criteria in the data summary table,
- (4) report the analytical results in the same units as the evaluation criteria, and
- (5) where background data are available, include background values in the data summary table.

**Comment 4. Photographs, Appendix 4:**

The scene depicted in Photograph No. 1, found in Appendix 4, appears to have been staged. The Permittee must provide photographs depicting actual locations of signage in future documents.

**Comment 5. Lagoon Liner:**

In the NOD dated June 6, 2005, the NMED expressed concern for the structural integrity of the oxidation lagoon liner. The Permittee indicated that the plastic liner is damaged due to weathering from ultraviolet light, air, and weather where the liner is exposed at the top of the banks around the perimeter. The Permittee further indicated that the majority of the liner is protected by soil cover, sediment, and wastewater and that there is no intent to replace the liner.

NMED noted that a second, overflow oxidation lagoon was built that can facilitate controlling the level of wastewater in the original oxidation lagoon. Because of the potential for release of contaminants beyond the lagoon perimeter, the Permittee must maintain the surface of wastewater in the original oxidation lagoon below the level where the liner is damaged. The Permittee must ensure that inlet(s) to any outfall structure that transfers overflow wastewater out of the original oxidation lagoon must be located below the level where the liner is damaged. In future documents, the Permittee must describe how overflow from the original oxidation lagoon is transferred to the second overflow oxidation lagoon.

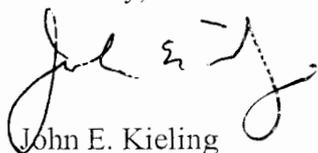
**Comment 6. Change in Use or Closure of Oxidation Lagoon:**

NMED concurs with the conclusions of this report. The Permittee has demonstrated that no significant risk attributable to operation of the oxidation lagoon has been identified and that conditions present at the lagoon do not pose a threat to human health or the environment. There is no evidence of release of metals or organic compounds beyond the lagoon perimeter at present. No corrective action is warranted at this time. However, all metals, except beryllium, are present in lagoon sediment at concentrations above background soil values.

Upon closure of the McGregor Range Camp oxidation lagoon(s) NMED expects the Permittee to conduct additional investigation to characterize the entire nature and extent of contamination at the lagoons and conduct remedial action, as necessary.

Please contact Pat Stewart at (505) 476-6059, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



John E. Kieling  
Program Manager  
Permits Management Program  
Hazardous Waste Bureau

cc: D. Cobrain, NMED HWB  
N. Dhawan, NMED HWB  
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