

KAFB 90

ANALYTICAL LABORATORY

ENTERED



*Acetone, Methylene Chloride  
2-Butanone & Toluene  
Common Lab. Contams.*

October 12, 1990

Mr. Ralph Wilcox  
U.S. Geological Survey  
Pine Tree Office Park, Suite 200  
4501 Indian School Road NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87110

Dear Ralph:

Concern has been expressed over the unexpected detection of certain target compounds (acetone, methylene chloride, and 2-butanone) by Method 8240.

These compounds, in addition to toluene, are common laboratory contaminants. This is recognized by the EPA in the CLP Statement of Work (2/88), which allows up to five times the detection limit for these compounds in the method blanks. All other compounds must be less than the detection limit.

The method blanks for two projects in question (RMAL 007798 and 008095) were re-examined. These blanks showed the presence of methylene chloride and acetone, although the amounts found were below the reporting limits. With the one exception, the results for all samples were less than about three times the reporting limit for the common laboratory contaminants. These amounts could easily arise from contamination and are probably not significant.

The laboratory makes every effort to prevent contamination. However, due to the use of these compounds throughout the laboratory and the sensitivity of the analytical method, it is impossible to eliminate them entirely. As a result, these compounds are often detected in varying concentrations near the reporting limit.

Please call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Breyer  
Program Administrator

LB/heg

cc: Dorothy Walker, USGS  
Randy Thompson, RMAL

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