General

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ALAMOS SCIENTIFIC LABORATORY
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P.O. BOX 1663
LOS ALAMOS, NEW MEXICO 87545

IN REPLY
REFER TO: H12-78-1
MAIL STOP 490

March 7, 1978

Ms. Margaret A. Rogers
Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory
P.O. Box 1663
Group H-12, MS-490
Los Alamos, NM 87545

Dear Ms. Rogers:

I have reviewed LA-6848-MS, Vol I of Vol II. In my opinion this is a complete history of the radioactive waste disposal operations at Los Alamos. I am sure that all burial sites, other than those used for ^{238}Uranium have been located and documented.

Burial sites for ^{238}Uranium must exist in the GMX Areas but I have no knowledge of their location.

0578 H-21

Sincerely,

Dean D. Meyer
Consultant to H-12

DDM:tj
Attachments: Seven memos
1. April 6, 1944
2. July 12, 1944
3. July 18, 1944
4. December 2, 1944
5. April 18, 1945
6. August, 1945
7. April 20, 1948

12136

TO: Margaret Anne Rogers, H-12 -2- DATE: November 13,1978
H12-78-380

APF-4 XIII New paragraph or sentence
High level beta-gamma waste that also containes a retrievable quantity of TRU waste is now being stored retrievably at Area G. TA-54.

Suggestions

(1) Area A is now supposed to be closed out--I'll check it tomorrow. 11/9/78, I checked it and it is.
(2)* bottom of page 1 Update sentence to include DOE and change all references to ERDA, etc. to DOE where appropriate
(3) page 6 IIA. (General) 2nd paragraph
Area A now inactive.
(4) Area C--see Warren's comment--I'd observe that the "open" shaft was known--and kept "open" because of the possibility that ^{235}U contaminated pipe "stored" in the shaft be retrieved.

(5) Area D. I agree partially $\overline{c}$ Warren--it was never a disposal site per se, but rather a small area that was contaminated. Guess it boils down to what the definition is for a "Disposal Area --."
(6) Area F. I'd guess from what you've learned about this Area's useage that it, too, falls into a questionable category. These "grey" areas need to be resolved!

II Summary and Conclusions, B (By Site), page 6
Area A--2nd sentence "It was the second common burial---" The word "second" should be "first."
Area B, 1st sentence "--is the first common burial ground--" The word "first" should be changed to "second."
I believe the above can be supported by checking with Dean, Toby Gomez, Tony Montoya, H-1 and the fact we were using Area B, by May, 1946, (Per Carl Peterson, H-7). Per Dean's comments - the pits in Area A had been filled and the space above ground used to store 55 gal. drums. When I started to work (Feb., 1948), the "General's Tanks Area" (Area A) was used to "store" contaminated equipment as well as the drums Dean mentioned.

Area B, page B-1, I. General Information
2nd Paragraph. Suggest 1st sentence to read "Area B probably was the second common solid waste ---."

Area A Questions - and some suggestions

1. Would also suggest William Maraman, CMB-11, Eldon Christenson, CMB-11, Robert Nance, CMB-11, and Ray Garde, H-1 may be helpful in shedding some light on the pit enlargement.

John Enders (person commun. Nov. 1978) says he believes that neither Area A or Area B was first, but instead an unrecognized area in vicinity of airport. We should contact Tobias Gomez.

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TO: Margaret Anne Rogers, H-12 -3- DATE: November 13, 1978
H12-78-380

2 & 3. Some names that are suggested would include: Dean Meyer, Carl Peterson, H-7, Larry Mullins, CMB-11, Art Morgan, CMB-11, R. D. Baker, CMB-DO, Charles Reynolds (formerly Eng-4, now retired), James Lelinthal (formerly CMB-DO, now retired) in addition to names listed above (in #1). Also, Robert Gilmore, CMB-11.
NOTE:
Although CMB-1 was based in "D" Bldg. some of the Group "old timers" may be able to shed some light on #2 and #3, such as William Ashley, Carl Bergstresser (retired) Glen Waterbury and Al Zerwekh.

It might also be helpful to interview Tony Montoya, H-1 (TA-33) and Tobias Gomez, formerly with the Zia Co. He is reportedly working for the State in Santa Fe. Toby was the driver of the truck that picked up packaged waste and delivered the waste to the disposal area(s). Am fairly sure he was working on this job back in 1944-45.

Area B Questions

#1. I would agree with Dean Meyers' observations on the subject.
#2. It may be suggested that CMB-DO (the main successor to CMR Div.) may have some information. Has anyone contacted John Bolton, retired, formerly CMR-DO Associate Div. Ldr.?
#3. William Purtymun ought to know--. Also, William Kennedy, retired, formerly H-6 (the old H-6 Group) should be able to help on this one.
#4. William Crismon, DOE (Los Alamos) might help out. Also, Neal Seeley, Los Alamos County, ought to be able to "shed some light."
#5. As the first delivery to Pit #1, Area C was on June 10, 1948, Area B would have been closed on the previous day (June 9, 1948).

Area C Questions

#1. Contact Charles Blackwell, H-1. He was in charge of the disposal. Also, the Los Alamos Notebook, in use for that time period, probably contains a logged entry of the entry of the disposal.
#2. By current standards, waste records prior to 1954 do not have much usefull information. However, some idea on waste volume can be projected as the number of boxes and drums were logged (starting with Pit #4). Also, when logged entries started reporting the Sites and/or buildings where waste was picked up, one can make a distinction between U waste and TRU waste.
#3. I made a sketch of Area C in one of the LA Notebooks, used for Area C, in which the pits were identified. Eng-3 should have maps somewhere in their files.

Dean Mey's comments 3-7-

TA21 DPW

When building 413 at DP-West was used for ^{239}Plutonium flouride production, the excess HF was washed into the drains system of the building and discharged into Area T. During repair work on the drain system a hole in the ground (Tuffa) was discovered under the drain line - it was evident that HF solutions had escaped and drained into the ground. This area will be of interest when building 413 is torn down.

TA33-Area 6

This area had surface contamination of ^{210}Polonium. Also the area was used for disposal of capacitors which may have contained PCB. I understand that these were dug up later and transferred to another burial area, I suppose Area G.

One surface shot of tritium was made at TA-33, some where in the area of the intersection of grids S 265 + 00 and E 245 + 00 as given on the structure location plan Eng. R 5116.

TA42 Incinerator site and TA35 Ten site.

The Incinerator building was also used for decontamination of equipment. Some of the waste water drained into the septic tank and was discharged into Mortandad Canyon. This water contained ^{239}Plutonium, ^{235}Uranium, ^{H3}Tritium, and fission products.

The waste holding tanks from Ten Site TA35 were discharged into Mortandad Canyon. The water contained traces of ^{90}Strontium.

TA54, Area H.

Area H was set aside for the disposal of classified equipment. No radioactivity contaminated material was to go into this area. However some ^{238}Uranium was placed in the area, also by mistake equipment containing tritium was disposed of in the area.

Sandia Canyon.

Sandia Canyon at one time contained some small waste pits in which ^{210}Polonium and beryllium was buried. These pits were dug up and the material sent to one of the regular waste burial areas. See attached letter.