

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

DATE: October 18, 1985

SUBJECT: Status of Public Water System at Los Alamos National Laboratory

FROM: Oscar Cabra, Jr., P.E. *Oscar Cabra*  
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TO: James Highland  
Federal Facilities Coordinator (6ES-FA)

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General

The public water system which serves the Los Alamos National Laboratory is called the Los Alamos County Water System. The Laboratory, Bandelier National Monument, and other locations within the County are served by the system. The system is operated jointly by the County and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The DOE owns the facilities (pumps, disinfection equipment, etc.) and the County maintains the distribution system. The system is listed as a community system (resident population) serving approximately 19,000 consumers. Source of water is 18 wells and 1 spring.

The Water Supply Program in New Mexico has been delegated to the New Mexico Environmental Improvement Division. Federal facilities have been ruled to be under State jurisdiction with regard to the water supply program in a delegated State. The State reports that the system has been in complete compliance with Water Supply regulations.

The Los Alamos National Laboratory was previously certified by the State to analyze inorganic chemical drinking water samples. The laboratory did not express an interest to be included in the State's proposed Third Party Laboratory Certification Program, therefore their certification expired on May 1, 1985. The laboratory has requested they be certified by EPA. According to the National Interim Primary Drinking Water Implementation Regulations, laboratory certification in a primacy State is a State responsibility. Thus, EPA will deny this request.

Please contact Len Pardee at 7-9052 if you need any further information.



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## The Status of the Drinking Water Program at Los Alamos National Laboratory

Since May 1979, the New Mexico Environmental Improvement Division has certified the Health and Environmental Chemistry Group (HSE-9) of the Los Alamos National Laboratory for the analysis of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act. However, the State of the New Mexico now has dropped its own certification program for laboratories located within the state but is allowing those laboratories which were certified to continue to operate until their certificates expire. It is anticipated that sometime in 1986, a third party will take over this certification of commercial laboratories within New Mexico although no third party has been approved at this time.

Not only does the Los Alamos National Laboratory provide water for its own use, but it provides drinking water to the residents of Los Alamos County and to the Bandelier National Monument. (The United States government, through the Department of Energy, owns the water rights in Los Alamos County from which the water is pumped). Since the Los Alamos National Laboratory is a public water supply serving more than 25 people (it serves approximately 19,000 as of June 1984), it must comply with the provisions of the Safe Drinking Water Act and the requirements of the National Interim Primary Drinking Water Regulations. Since the state of New Mexico has discontinued its certification program, the Los Alamos National Laboratory as well as the Department of Energy, its parent organization, and the State of New Mexico have requested the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Region VI to certify the Los Alamos

National Laboratory. The alternative would be the requiring of Los Alamos National Laboratory to apply for third party certification after this process has been established. No decision on the Region's certifying the Los Alamos National Laboratory has been reached. However, Region 6 policy is to certify only the primary state laboratories. Under delegation. The State is responsible for any subsequent certifications.