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Environment Department to Collect \$60,000 to Resolve Numerous LANL Environmental Violations

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has entered into a final order with the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) to resolve numerous violations under the New Mexico Hazardous Waste Act, regulations and LANL's permit. These violations were uncovered during unannounced inspections of the LANL facility in 2004 and 2005. LANL was notified of these issues through a Notice of Violation (NOV) issued by NMED on April 20, 2005.

LANL has agreed to pay a civil penalty of \$60,328 to resolve these eight violations. These funds will go to the State of New Mexico Hazardous Waste Emergency Fund where they will be available for environmental clean ups.

"This settlement is a good example of NMED's 'tough but fair' enforcement policy," said NMED Secretary Ron Curry. "Sizable penalties like this one should help deter future environmental problems at the lab."

Violations found included: storage of hazardous waste in unpermitted areas, storage of hazardous waste in open containers; failure to properly label hazardous waste; and failure to maintain adequate operating records for hazardous waste storage areas. Since these inspections were conducted, all violations have been corrected. LANL's agreement to settle these issues does not constitute an admission of guilt for the alleged violations.

The final order is between NMED, the United States Department of Energy (DOE) and the University of California, who operates the lab under contract with DOE.

This civil penalty of \$60,328 must be paid to NMED within 30 days of the issuance of the settlement agreement. If LANL fails to do this, it will be charged interest at the rate established by state law.

For further information contact Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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