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LANL  
(Office)  
Bayo Canyon Sewage Treatment Plant  
Hobby Canyon

RECEIVED  
JUN 11 1997  
DOE OVERSIGHT BUREAU

Certified Mail-Return Receipt Requested  
P 332 409 054

June 10, 1997

John Barker  
Louk

Mr. Jeff Cotter  
Wastewater Environmentalist  
Bayo Wastewater Treatment Plant  
Los Alamos County of Public Works  
P.O. Box 1030  
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544-1030

RE: Investigation Report of Possible Discharge in Bayo Canyon

Dear Mr. Cotter:

On May 15, 1997, Ms. Ann Young and Ms. Barbara Hoditschek of the New Mexico Environment Department-Surface Water Quality Bureau (NMED-SWQB) while on other business in the area, were informed by Mr. Ralph Ford-Schmid and Mr. Chris Hanlon-Meyer of the NMED-DOE Oversight Bureau (NMED-DOE/OB) that a discharge might have occurred in Bayo Canyon. The DOE/OB staff had been locating DOE soil sampling stations in Bayo Canyon (on DOE property ) when they happened upon the site in question. Before returning to their inspection Ms. Young and Hoditschek consulted with staff at the Los Alamos DOE/OB office located in White Rock to gain more information regarding the possible discharge. Also, while Ms. Young and Hoditschek were at the White Rock Office they placed a call to Mr. Mike Coffman of the NMED-SWQB Santa Fe office notifying him of the concern and inquiring if any discharges had recently been reported in the Bayo Area.

Mr. Coffman checked the records and called the Bayo Wastewater Treatment Plant (BWWTP) informing them of the concern reported to him by Ms. Young and Hoditschek, and inquired if any overflows has occurred at the BWWTP. The plant representative who spoke to Mr. Coffman

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indicated he was not aware of any discharges which had occurred. Ms. Young and Hoditschek returned to Los Alamos and continued their inspection. That same afternoon upon returning to the Santa Fe office, Ms. Hoditschek again called the BWWTP, further discussed the concern about a possible discharge in Bayo Canyon, and made arrangements with a BWWTP representative to investigate the supposed area of discharge the following morning.

Ms. Young and Hoditschek met Mr. Nelson Edmunds at the gate on May 16, 1996 at 8:09AM. Ms. Young and Hoditschek, and Mr. Edmunds proceeded to the area they thought was the area of concern, walked the area, but found nothing. Ms. Young and Hoditschek were let out the gate at 8:27 AM. They indicated to Mr. Edmunds that they may have to return after consultation with the persons who reported the possible discharge because they may have been mistaken about the location of the site.

Ms. Hoditschek called DOE/OB later that day and indicated that she was not sure whether they had observed the area of concern. DOE/OB representative Mr. Ralph Ford-Schmid volunteered to show Ms. Hoditschek the location. Ms. Hoditschek again called the BWWTP about the concern, and made arrangements to be escorted through the gate on May 22, 1997. She also requested that the plant representative inform Mr. Gene Salazar, the WWTP Superintendent who was out of town at the time of the call, what she was planning to do.

On May 22, 1997, at 8:10AM Ms. Hoditschek and Mr. Ford-Schmid entered the gate. Mr. Ford-Schmid was driving and drove Ms. Hoditschek to the location of the area of concern. Ms. Hoditschek waited at the entrance to the turn-off for the plant representative. The plant representative, (Mr. Richard Salazar), Mr. Ford-Schmid, and Ms. Hoditschek then went out to the site. While they were viewing the site, Mr. Gene Salazar, yourself, and Mr. Paul Pizzoli drove up and joined us. Ms. Hoditschek and Mr. Ford-Schmid identified themselves and explained their purpose at the site. Mr. Pizzoli expressed concern to Mr. Ford-Schmid that a Los Alamos county representative had not been notified before NMED had been notified. Mr. Ford-Schmid indicated DOE/OB did not routinely report such concerns to the county. DOE/OB is mandated however, to inform DOE and the appropriate NMED Bureau. He indicated however, that he would look into the possibility of making arrangements to include the county. Mr. Pizzoli, Mr. Gene Salazar and Mr. Ford-Schmid then discussed the biology regarding the site, and what had been perceived as a possible discharge. It was decided that the black material in the stream and on the banks was algae and not an illegal discharge from either the plant or DOE. Ms. Hoditschek asked, and was granted, permission to take a photo of the part of the stream displaying the suspect condition. The photo is attached. Ms. Hoditschek and Mr. Ford-Schmid told the county and plant representatives that the investigation was closed since there seemed to be no problem. Ms. Hoditschek also indicated a report regarding the investigation would be forthcoming from NMED-SWQB.

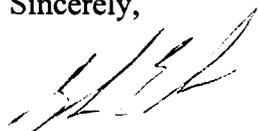
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Conclusions:

1. Ms. Young and Hoditschek of the NMED-SWQB promptly responded under authority of the New Mexico Water Quality Act (74-6-9. E.) to investigate a reported possible discharge to Bayo Canyon and to delineate the impact to the human health and/or environment.
2. Mr. Ralph-Ford Schmid and other DOE/OB staff who reported the suspect discharge are part of the NMED and are required to report any possible discharges they may encounter during their work associated on DOE property to NMED and the DOE. Reporting to the County if necessary, is a function of the NMED bureau contacted by the DOE/OB staff to investigate a report.
3. The County was promptly notified of the concern by NMED/SWQB when Mr. Coffman called and again on two separate occasions when Ms. Hoditschek of the NMED/SWQB called.
4. Investigation of the site by NMED staff indicated no environmental or human health threat had occurred.
5. The county as well as the BWWTP is being officially informed through this report of the outcome of this investigation . A copy of the report will be sent to Mr. Gene Salazar of the BWWTP, and Mr. Paul Pizzoli of the county. The DOE will also receive a copy of the report since the investigation occurred on their property. This report will also become part of the NMED-SWQB file associated with the BWWTP.

The NMED-SWQB appreciates your quick response and cooperation in this matter. If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Ms. Barbara Hoditschek of my staff at 827-0596.

Sincerely,



Glenn Saums  
Program Manager-PSRS

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Enclosure

cc: Tim Michael, DOE/OB, Santa Fe  
Steve Yanisak, DOE/OB, White Rock  
Ed Kelley, Acting Bureau Chief, SWQB  
Bonnie Koch, DOE MS A316  
Gene Salazar, BWWTP, Superintendent  
Paul Pizzoli, Los Alamos County, Dir. Gas, Water and Wastewater Operations  
File: NMED:SWQB:Bayo Wastewater Treatment Plant