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Permit

Notification of Non-Compliance

Los Alamos National Laboratory
NPDES Permit No. NM0028355
October 11, 1991

1. Location of Discharge

Los Alamos National Laboratory
Technical Area (TA) 3 near the University House
NPDES Outfall 03A-023
Sandia Canyon

2. Nature of Non-Compliance

An oily sheen was observed on October 5, 1990, on the discharge from the storm drainage system near the University House which serves as Outfall 03A-023 for treated cooling water blowdown.

3. Amount of Discharge

The average flow from Outfall 03A-023 is 5.6 gallons per minute based upon flow measurements made for the Laboratory's NPDES Permit Reapplication submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on September 4, 1990. The amount of oil released to the environment causing the oily sheen is not known but it is estimated to be less than five gallons based upon the amount of oil captured by means of the absorbent booms and pillows installed below the outfall after the oily sheen was observed.

4. Non-Compliance Inspection and Notification

The oily sheen was reported directly to the N.M. Environmental Improvement Division (EID) by an unnamed person who noticed this condition during the morning of October 5, 1990. The Laboratory's Environmental Protection Group (HSE-8) was notified by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Los Alamos Area Office, at about 11:00 on October 5 when two representatives from the EID arrived at the Area Office for an inspection of Outfall 03A-023. The DOE and HSE-8 personnel had no prior knowledge of this condition.

The representatives from the EID completed their inspection of the facilities and indicated that their inspection report would serve as notification of the discharge to the EID. The EPA, Region VI, was notified through a message left on their hotline at approximately 4:30 pm on October 5. A follow-up report was made to Gladys Jackson of EPA, Region VI, at 2:00 pm on October 10th.

5. Affected Area

Upon further investigation, the oily sheen was observed downstream from Outfall 03A-023 along a small drainage about 1,200 feet in length to a point where the small drainage joins a large flow (greater than 100 gpm) from Outfall 01A-001 which originates from the TA-3 Power Plant. There was no oily sheen observed in the wetland area below the confluence of small drainage with the flow from the TA-3 Power Plant. The flow through the wetland area enters the subsurface at a point in Sandia Canyon located about seven miles from the closest perennial stream, the Rio Grande. There was no oily sheen which reached the Rio Grande.



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6. Mitigation of Affected Area

The Pan Am Environmental Spill Response Team was notified immediately after the oily sheen was observed by DOE and HSE-8 personnel. After sampling was completed by EID and HSE-8 personnel, oil absorbent booms and pillows were installed along the length of the affected area to remove the oily sheen. The Response Team continued their work into the evening of October 5th and during Saturday, October 6th, in order to maintain the booms and pillows and eliminate any of the oily sheen from leaving the affected area.

7. Corrective Actions

The Laboratory's Engineering Division (ENG) and Health, Safety and Environment Division (HSE) have formed an emergency task force to locate the source of the oily sheen within the storm drainage system and take corrective actions. A crew of approximately 15 persons from the Laboratory and Pan Am have been investigating the storm drainage system and conducting dye tests. Several potential sources of oil into the storm drainage system have been plugged and the absorbent booms and pillows are being maintained in order to remove any residual oil coming from the system. A catchment basin has been built with sandbags at the outfall in order to allow further separation and collection of the oily sheen in addition to that provided by the absorbent booms and pillows.

At the present time, the exact source of the oily sheen has not been confirmed but the absorbent booms and pillows, and catchment basin are being maintained until all potential sources are identified and eliminated from the storm drainage system. Additional cleanup is planned as soon as all potential sources are eliminated. The Laboratory has issued a work order in the amount of \$25,000 to cover the cost of this work.

8. Names and Addresses of Persons in Charge

Harry T. Seasons Jr.
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Owner and Operator

Allen J. Tiedman
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