

Kieling, John, NMENV

From: Donald Sandstrom [djmf sands@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 02, 2009 3:09 PM
To: Kieling, John, NMENV
Subject: Comments on Revised Draft RCRA Renewal Permit For Los Alamos National Laboratory
Attachments: Sandstrom RCRA comments.doc

Mr. Kieling: The attached document concerning the referenced subject have been prepared by me for your review and consideration. I am a private citizen who desires to be helpful to the people of New Mexico and the US as a whole. I would like to see the RCRA Permit Renewed and that all the necessary work to be done to meet the requirements of the RCRA be met safely, efficiently and effectively.

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September 3, 2009
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Mr. John E. Kieling, Program Manager
Hazardous Waste Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

Dear Mr. Keiling:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the July 6, 2009 version of the revised draft Resource Conservation and Recovery Act [RCRA] permit for renewal of the current Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory [LANL] RCRA permit.

In reviewing the timeline for this permit as provided in your fact sheets, it seems quite apparent that there is something fundamentally wrong with the New Mexico Environment Department [NMED] permitting process that allows a permit renewal to be 10 years behind schedule. If this were a new permit, I can understand that some delay might be inevitable as something new was being created. However, this is a renewal of an existing permit which, by extension, has been valid for 20 years or 10 years beyond its expiration date and 3 years beyond the change of the operating contractor.

This delay calls into question NMED's ability to properly manage RCRA permitting for large facilities in New Mexico. Therefore, I request that a public hearing be held to discuss NMED's permitting process in order to assess NMED's ability to successfully manage RCRA permitting for complex facilities. The permit should not be issued until NMED can successfully demonstrate its ability to manage the permit. No matter how good or bad the permit may be, if the regulator is incapable of managing it properly, the permittees and the citizens of New Mexico will be poorly served. Items to be discussed include but are not limited to:

1. Why the delay has been so long to renew an existing permit.
2. What is needed to effectively manage the permit.
3. What resources are needed to manage the permit.
4. NMED's ability to get the needed resources.
5. Should NMED relinquish its authority to manage RCRA and give the authority back to the Environmental Protection Agency.

For the record, I am retired and I live at the address listed on this letter. I represent myself as a private citizen as I no longer have any professional affiliation with Los Alamos National Lab, or the Department of Energy. My interest in this subject comes from a career of more than forty years in research and development of materials and in the management of large and complex facilities and operations involving hazardous as well as special nuclear materials.

My work experience at the Laboratory and on special assignments at the request of the DOE at the Rocky Flats Plant were always conducted in a manner that minimized risk to people, property, and the environment while adhering to all applicable laws and regulations. My experience also convinced me that positive interactions between the Laboratory and the regulators leads to positive cost effective results.

It is my great hope that issues involving the renewal of the LANL RCRA Permit can be resolved and all parties can proceed in a safe and efficient manner.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Donald J. Sandstrom