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Department of Energy
Albuquerque Operations
Los Alamos Area Office
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544

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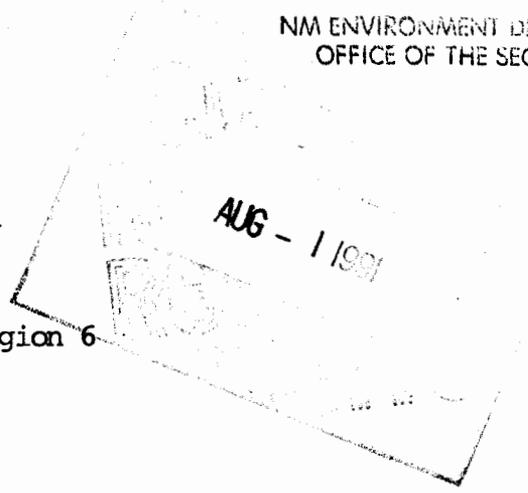
JUL 31 1991

NM ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

JUL 26 1991

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Allyn Davis, Director
Hazardous Waste Management Division
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200
Dallas, TX 75202-2733



Dear Mr. Davis:

During a construction project at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), the excavation of a drum occurred in an area where there was no record of historical disposal practices taking place. The 55-gallon drum appeared to contain a tar or asphalt-like substance. The drum was unearthed on July 12, 1991, from the floor of Los Alamos Canyon, Technical Area (TA)-0. This new Solid Waste Management Unit (SWMU) was discovered during the upgrading of the bridge spanning that canyon. At this time, it is unknown when the drum was placed at this location. The Department of Energy (DOE) has reviewed LANL's Solid Waste Management Unit (SWMU) report, and conferred with members of the Environmental Restoration Program Office (HSE-13) as well as members of the Environmental Protection Group (HSE-8) and performed a site visit. Upon completion of the above sequence of activities, DOE concurs that this discovery is, in fact, a new SWMU. As required by the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendment provisions of our Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permit, we are submitting to your office our 15-day written notification of this discovery.

The HSE-8 has sampled the contents of the drum to characterize the waste so that proper disposal can take place. An electromagnetic survey has been performed in the vicinity of the discovery, revealing no other drums in the area.

We believe that this SWMU poses no threat to human health or the environment. The drum was removed and will be disposed of as an interim action. If the analytical results from sampling effort depict no immediate threat to human health or the environment, the RCRA Corrective Action process will proceed as it is currently scheduled for characterization and remediation.



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Mr. Allyn Davis

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Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Steve Slaten of my staff. He can be reached at (505) 665-5050.

Sincerely,



Jerry L. Bellows
Area Manager

LESH:2SS-019

cc:

Allen Tiedman, ADO, LANL, MS-A120

Tom Gunderson, HSE-DO, LANL, MS-K491

Kenneth Hargis, (HSE-8:91-1257-1), HSE-8, LANL, MS-K490

Robert Vocke, HSE-13, LANL, MS-K481

Sheila Brown, LC/GL, LANL, MS-A187

Kathleen Sisneros, Director, NMED, Santa Fe, NM 87503