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

RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

CERTIFIED MAIN - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

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

RECEIVED
JUL 8 AM 8:30
1991
EPA REGION VI
HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Dear Mr. Gallagher

On June 12, 1991, a release was confirmed from an industrial waste drainline or the tanks which these lines serve. The tanks have been identified in the Solid Waste Management Unit (SWMU) Report as number 3-037. The release was discovered beneath the basement floor of the Sigma Building (SM-66) within Technical Area (TA) 3. The release was discovered during a reconnaissance survey performed by the Environmental Protection Group (HSE-8) in support of construction activities that are planned for the area. These tanks and drainlines have been taken out of service.

On April 18, 1991, HSE-8's Waste Site Studies Section drilled three core holes through the basement floor to a depth of three feet. The cores from the concrete and soil beneath the floor were analyzed for radioactive constituents and Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP) metals. A preliminary study in 1989 showed no evidence of Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) volatile or semivolatile compounds.

After receiving and reviewing the analytical results in June, it was discovered that gross alpha, beta, and gamma radioactivity were all at background levels in all sample materials. Total uranium (U) in all concrete samples were at background levels; however, levels of total U in all of the soil samples taken below the basement floor were above background concentrations. Concentrations of total U beneath the basement floor ranged from 3.9 ppm to 22.3 ppm. The upper limit background concentrations of total U in this area is 3.4 ppm. All TCLP metals were below Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines found in 40 CFR Section 261.24 with the exception of Pb in one of the samples. This particular sample was collected at a depth of three feet.

Dave McInroy of Los Alamos National Laboratory's (Laboratory) Environmental Protection Group (HSE-8) made a 24 hour oral notification of this release to Mr. Richard Mayer of your staff on June 12, 1991.

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As required by the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendment (HSWA) provisions of our RCRA permit, we are submitting to your office our 15 day written notification of this discovery.

We believe that the levels of contaminants found related to this release pose no threat to human health or the environment. Further characterization of this release will occur during the construction activities scheduled for the area. If similar levels of contamination are discovered as a result of further investigation, and review of these analyses also 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. If future investigations imply that health or environmental risks are present, we will negotiate with EPA to conduct an interim action to mitigate the threat. This would be a separate and distinctly different from the institutional interim actions currently being performed as a result of Laboratory construction requirements.

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

Sincerely,

Jerry L. Bellows
Area Manager

LESH:2SS-008

cc w/enclosure:
Kenneth Hargis, HSE-8, LANL, MS-K490
Robert Vocke, HSE-13, LANL, MS-K481

cc w/o enclosure:
John Themelis, EPD, AL
Allen Tiedman, ADO, LANL, MS-A120
Tom Gunderson, HSE-DO, LANL, MS-K491

ALL-CS