

TA 21



NEW MEXICO  
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT



*DOE Oversight Bureau*

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RON CURRY  
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Deputy Secretary

December 12, 2007

Richard Powell  
New Mexico Environment Department  
Surface Water Quality Bureau  
1190 St. Francis Dr  
Suite N4050  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

SUBJECT: Spill Response Assessment and Suggestion for Close-Out of Contaminated Rainwater  
Mixed with a Shipment of Low-level Waste Release at TA-21 and TA-54 Area G,  
LANL report # 178 on August 14, 2007.

Dear Mr. Powell:

On August 14, 2007, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) was notified of a spill of contaminated rainwater mixed with a shipment of low-level waste of approximately 20 gallons at TA-21 and TA-54 Area G located at Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, New Mexico. A roll-off bin carrying low-level waste (borehole cuttings) leaked radioactive water from it's tailgate while in transit from TA-21 to TA-54 Area G. Absorbents were used to soak up any free standing water and the rear of the roll-off was wrapped in plastic at the TA-54 Area G gate for transportation into the area in order to avoid any additional leaks from the container. In addition, LANL implemented a standing order to the Packaging and Transportation Group regarding inspection criteria for the use of roll-off bins for loading, storage and transfer of regulated and non-regulated wastes, effective 9/12/2007. The intent of the standing order was to modify operations in order to prevent any future occurrences. This spill was reported to the Emergency Spill Hotline as required by 20.6.2.1203 NMAC of the Water Quality Control Commission.

The DOE Oversight Bureau has reviewed the spill discharge notification report on August 22, 2007 and has found that the spill mitigation is sufficient to protect the environment of New Mexico. The Oversight Bureau believes the response and clean-up has been adequate and recommends that no further action is required at this time under this discharge notification. However, this letter does not relieve the United States Department of Energy or the Los Alamos National Security, LLC, of its obligation to comply with any other applicable laws and regulations.



Mr. Richard Powell

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If you have any questions regarding this recommendation, please contact Erik Galloway of our Santa Fe office at (505) 476-6024.

Sincerely,



Stephen Yanicak  
Staff Manager/POC

xc: Gene Turner, DOE/AIP/POC MS A316  
Mark Haagenstad, LANS/ENV-RCRA/WQ MS K490  
Tina Sandoval, LANS/ENV-RCRA/WQ MS K490  
Robert George, NMED/GWQB  
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Jake Knatson, NMED/GWQB  
Jenn Montoya, NMED/GWQB  
Barry Birch, NMED/DOE OB  
Erik Galloway, NMED/DOE OB  
Spill File

At 11:40 am on August 16, 2007, Steve Connolly and myself received a call from Mr. Timothy Zimmerly of WQ/RERA LANL that during a transport of drilling soils/cuttings from TA-21 MDA-A to TA-54 water was seen coming out of the back of a roll-on container that was placed on a semi-transport truck. When the truck got to TA-54 and on route approximately 20 gallons of fluid leaked from the truck onto the roadway, DP road and up through White Rock. A sample was taken and it was found to be above the standard for both Alpha and Beta radiation, Gamma analysis is still pending. This container had been sitting at the site for approximately 1 year and originally they thought it was storm water coming off the tarp. I asked them what remedial action they were doing and they told me the soil roll-on soil had already been disposed into the "pit" at Area G but they had suspended operations and were in the process of reviewing their protocols and talking to site people to make sure it did not happen again because there is still 1 roll-on on-site for transport and disposal. The incident happened on August 14 at approximately 2:45 pm.

I made sure that they understood that this report was being covered under §1203 of the WQCC regulations and that Hazardous Waste Bureau would be immediately contacted for further inquiry. Immediately after I hung-up the phone, I went and informed Kathryn Roberts because I know she has the MDA-V and MDA-B sites. She informed me that MDA-A is Darlene Goering's site and she is either out or in Albuquerque so Kathryn asked me to do a write-up. The seven day spill report will be faxed on or by the 21<sup>st</sup>. Contact information is

**Tim Zimmerly, CPESC**  
**Water Quality & RCRA Group**  
**Los Alamos National Laboratory**  
**MS K490**  
**Los Alamos, NM 87545**  
**email: zimmerly@lanl.gov**  
**office: 505-664-0105**  
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**fax: 505-665-9344.**

**Please let me know if I can be of further assistance in this matter. Erik**