

SECRET
SECURITY INFORMATION
OFFICE MEMORANDUM

LOS ALAMOS SCIENTIFIC LABORATORY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ALAMOS, NEW MEXICO
THIS DOCUMENT CONSISTS OF 2 PAGE(S)
NO. 1 OF 3 COPIES, SERIES 4

TO : Dean D. Meyer, Group Leader, H-1
FROM : Chas. D. Blackwell, H-1 Monitoring Section
SUBJECT: CONTAMINATION FROM BUTTON SHOT AT TA-33
SYMBOL : H-1-M-19

DATE: April 17, 1952

LAST REC OFFICIAL

TA 33
There was a "button" shot at Area #6, TA-33, on April 4, 1952, which contaminated the area. The contamination was caused by a crack in the assembly, and the area around the target, extending out approximately 25 ft., became contaminated. Wind direction was checked before firing and the contamination was carried west, away from the building in the area. Filter queens were running in the area of the shot and one filter gave a total count of 377,000 c/m. This is believed caused by the sudden burst of active material mixed with a lot of dust which was immediately drawn into the filter queen. The filter queen was contaminated to the extent of 2,000 c/m and was later decontaminated. The filter was cut into 10 pieces and counted by Harry Schulte's group. One piece of filter paper from the center of the paper gave an exceptionally high count of 128,000 c/m.

Personnel, wearing two pairs of coveralls, surgeons caps, two pairs of booties, two pairs of gloves and using the new respirators with the ultra filters, entered the area from the up-wind side to remove the assembly. By this time the wind had carried some of the loose contamination away, which cleared most of the air. A quick check of the assembly gave a count of 200,000 c/m+, so grease was applied along the crack in the assembly and it was sealed in two plastic bags and hauled away by the C2 and buried in the dump. The entire checking and sealing operation was done in not over four minutes. A check of the personnel after the operation showed that the contamination was confined to about 10,000 c/m on booties and about 2,000 c/m on the outer pair of gloves.

Later the equipment was checked and the counting geometry had approximately 1,500 c/m and the ground, in spots, had 200,000 c/m+. The ground and equipment has been decontaminated. The monitoring was carried out by Alex Gutierrez and he did a very thorough job. Urine counts were taken on all personnel in the area and the results are as follows:

Edward M. Little - 2.3 c/m

Alex Gutierrez - 8.1 c/m

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PER DOC REVIEW JAN 1972

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The above men were the only ones that were close to the assembly before it was sealed. This was one of the most ruptured assemblies we have had in this area, and by close cooperation of all groups concerned in these operations, including the weather men, the contamination was kept to a minimum.

Chas. D. Blackwell
Chas. D. Blackwell

CDB/eg

cc: Harry Schulte
File

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