



Department of Energy

Albuquerque Operations Office
Los Alamos Area Office
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544

OCT 14 1999



CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. John Kieling
Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2044 Galisteo St., Building A
P. O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Mr. Kieling:

Subject: Puncturing of Glass Containers at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL),
Technical Area (TA) 46

The purpose of this letter is to provide a written report notifying you of the puncturing of three (3) 4-liter glass bottles containing a mixture of nitric, hydrofluoric, and hydrochloric acids possibly contaminated with iron powder. Your approval to perform this activity was provided to Alice Barr of the Hazardous and Solid Waste Group at LANL via telephone on October 7, 1999.

Following cleanup and evaluation of a spill identified in a Satellite Accumulation Area (SAA) at TA-46, it was determined that it had resulted from over-pressurization and subsequent rupturing of a glass bottle containing the waste described above. Upon further investigation, three additional bottles containing similar waste at the SAA were observed with gas bubbles that indicated they were possibly becoming over-pressurized. It was decided that pressure relief by remotely puncturing the container caps was necessary and should be performed by the Hazardous Materials and the Hazardous Devices Teams.

Air Quality Group personnel at LANL determined that the planned release of the material generated during the operation would not result in significant emissions with respect to air quality requirements. Safe standoff distances for the HAZMAT personnel were calculated and personnel not directly associated with this operation were excluded from the puncturing area.

The puncturing of the containers was completed on October 7, 1999, at TA-46. After the puncturing process, an inspection of the surrounding area was completed and revealed no unusual occurrences. The contents of all containers will be sampled, analyzed, and managed appropriately.

If you have any questions, please call me at (505) 665-5042.

Sincerely,

H. L. "Jody" Plum
Office of Environment

LAAME:6JP-162



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