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# Laboratory removes contaminated soil

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LOS ALAMOS, N.M., Nov. 18, 2002 -- Los Alamos National Laboratory has successfully cleaned up contaminated soil that was discovered during a utilities trenching operation in August.

Workers with Duratek Federal Services Inc. completed the cleanup operation near the end of September as part of a nearly two-month project at Technical Area 48. Crews removed nearly 150 cubic yards of soil contaminated with volatile organic compounds. The contaminant levels did not pose an immediate risk to the public or the environment. The affected area has been cleaned beyond standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency and the cleanup has been deemed a success by officials in the Laboratory's Risk Reduction and Environmental Stewardship Division.

Workers discovered the contaminated soil while digging a trench in the area in August. The Laboratory immediately reported the discovery to regulatory agencies and the public. The source of the contamination is still unknown, but officials are confident that all contaminated soils have been removed and disposed of.

After removal of the soil, crews monitored the area to ensure that there was no further contamination. Analyses of the area and its vicinity verified that the cleanup was fully successful.

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