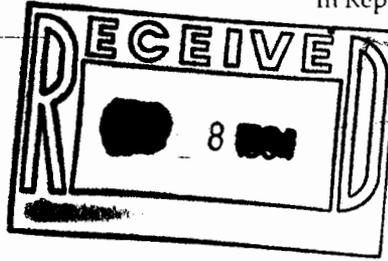


Los Alamos

NATIONAL LABORATORY

Environment, Safety & Health Division
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545
FAX (505) 665-3811



Date: November 4, 1994
In Reply Refer To: ESH-DO:94-734
Mail Stop: K491
Telephone: (505) 667-4218

*Copies to
Barbara
Ron K.
Original to
my reading file
Bonds*

Ms. Kathleen M. Sisneros, Director
Water and Waste Management Division
N. M. Environment Department
P.O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO NMED LETTER OF NOVEMBER 1, 1994, REGARDING
TECHNICAL AREA (TA)-50 RADIOACTIVE LIQUID WASTE
TREATMENT PLANT**

Dear Ms. Sisneros:

We are in receipt of your letter of November 1, 1994, regarding seepage of liquid from tanks located at the Laboratory's Technical Area (TA)-50 Radioactive Liquid Waste Treatment Plant. We would like to provide you with the following clarifications as discussed by Alan McMillan, Deputy Director of the Laboratory's Environment, Safety, and Health (ESH) Division with you by phone on November 3, 1994. Additional information is also provided below regarding these issues.

1. The seepage referenced in the Laboratory's Capital Assets Management Plan and identified in your letter of November 1st originates along cracks in the sides of the concrete clarifiers at TA-50, Building 1. These clarifiers are enclosed in Building 1 and the clarifier sides can be accessed from the basement of the building. Seepage from these cracks is fully contained inside the basement area where the seepage is collected and routed to the head of the plant for treatment.
2. Formal notification concerning the seepage from the clarifiers at the TA-50 Plant has not been made to the NMED under N.M. Water Quality Control Commission (NMWQCC) Regulations since the seepage is fully contained inside the basement, and is collected and routed to the head of the plant. NMED staff have advised the Laboratory in the past that releases contained inside of buildings do not require formal notification under NMWQCC Regulations. The seepage from the TA-50 clarifiers does not discharge to the environment. In addition, there have been numerous NMED inspections of the TA-50 Plant over the years, and NMED inspectors and NMED Agreement-In-Principal staff have viewed this seepage and collection system.
3. The Laboratory had requested a meeting with NMED staff with a tentative date of September 14, 1994, to discuss the on-going sub-surface investigations at TA-50. During the planning for this meeting, it was recognized that several Laboratory organizations had not been fully included and additional time was needed in order to prioritize work and to prepare a complete and comprehensive presentation. NMED's point of contact for the proposed meeting was notified that the Laboratory was not adequately prepared to meet and that the Laboratory would reschedule the meeting at a later date when all Laboratory organizations could be properly represented.



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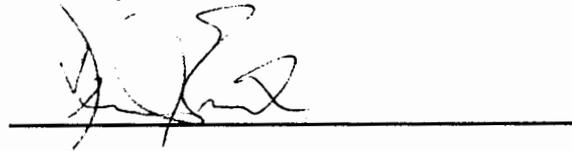
November 4, 1994

4. The Laboratory has not cancelled the sub-surface investigations at TA-50. In fact, the first phase of drilling and sampling along the abandoned influent line from TA-55 to TA-50 has just been completed. Subsequent work planned in the area includes drilling and sampling in order to determine if migration of contaminants from Material Disposal Area (MDA) C has occurred, and to complete angle drilling at the TA-50 Plant.

Please be assured that the Laboratory intends to complete all investigations at the TA-50 Plant and MDA C as required under the RCRA Corrective Action Permit. The Laboratory is also conducting several special studies under the Waste Management Program at the TA-50 Plant in order to verify structural integrity of the existing facilities. Laboratory and DOE personnel representing these programs and representing the Laboratory's Environment, Safety, and Health Division will be available to meet with you and your staff to discuss these on-going investigations and TA-50 Plant operations at your convenience. We suggest that the meeting be held at TA-50 Plant so that the seepage from the clarifiers can be viewed and TA-50 Plant operations can be observed. It would also be helpful to discuss the on-going and planned sub-surface investigations in the field at TA-50. Possible dates for this meeting include November 16th, 17th or 18th.

Please call Alan McMillan at 667-4218 or Joe Vozella at 665-5027 if additional information at this time would be helpful. We will be contacting your office in order to schedule an appropriate meeting time when these issues can be discussed in detail with you and your staff.

Sincerely,

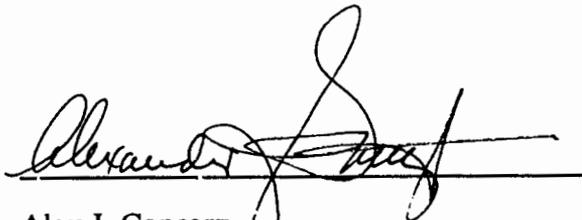


Dennis J. Erickson
Director
Environment, Safety and Health Division
Los Alamos National Laboratory

Sincerely,



Larry D. Kirkman
Acting Area Manager
Los Alamos Area Office
U.S. Department of Energy



Alex J. Gancarz
Director
Chemical Science and Technology Division
Los Alamos National Laboratory

Ms. Kathleen M. Sisneros
ESH-DO:94-734

- 3 -

November 4, 1994

AJG/LDK:DJE:SR/em

Cy: S. Hecker, DIR, MS A100
T. Baca, PDEMP, MS J591
S. Brown, LC-Gen, MS A187
DD-ESH File, MS K491
WQ&H File, MS K497
J. Vozella, DOE/LAAO, MS A316
M. Leavitt, NMED, GWPRB, Santa Fe, New Mexico
D. McQuillan, NMED, GWPRB, Santa Fe, New Mexico
B. Garcia, NMED, HRMB, Santa Fe, New Mexico
J. Piatt, NMED, SWQB, Santa Fe, New Mexico
B. Swanton, NMED, AIP, Santa Fe, New Mexico