

81613

HAZARDOUS AND RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS BUREAU

New Mexico Environment Department

*Position Paper**Position Paper*

DETERMINATION OF EXTENT OF CONTAMINATION

The vertical and horizontal extent of contamination at a specific site (including off-site migration) is considered adequately determined once concentrations of (1) inorganic constituents (including radionuclides) have been spatially (in three dimensions) delineated relative to background concentrations and (2) organic constituents have been spatially (in three dimensions) delineated relative to practical quantitation limits.

The Facility may petition the Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau for a variance from the above-stated requirements on a case-by-case basis by applying other criteria/considerations which demonstrate the protection of human health and the environment. Factors that may affect the determination of the extent (vertical and horizontal) of contamination include, but are not limited to, the following:

- contaminant concentration gradient,
- contaminant characteristics which influence environmental fate and transport,
- site environmental setting (e.g., geology, hydrogeology, erosion potential, etc.),
- operational history,
- number and location of samples,
- detection limits relative to background or other reference values¹,
- media,
- type of source (e.g., surface impoundment, outfall, etc.), and
- source integrity.

¹Other reference values may include environmental standards (e.g., New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission regulations, etc.) or criteria (e.g., Ambient Water Quality Criteria, etc.).

