

# Los Alamos

NATIONAL LABORATORY

*Environment, Safety and Health Division (ESH-19)*  
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ESH-19:99-0085

September 13, 1999

## HAND DELIVERED

John Kieling  
New Mexico Environment Department  
Hazardous and Radioactive Materials Bureau  
2044 Galisteo Street, P.O. Box 26110  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

Dear Mr. Kieling:

### **SUBJECT: Discharge of Potable Water to TA-53 Surface Impoundments Due To Hydrostatic Testing of The New RLW Treatment Plant**

The purpose of this letter is to confirm the notice provided to your office by telephone on September 3, 1999, regarding the discharge of water to the Technical Area (TA)-53 Radioactive Liquid Waste (RLW) Surface Impoundment from the hydrostatic testing of new lift stations associated with the RLW Treatment System currently under construction at the site. On Wednesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 1999, Lee Winn contacted me on your behalf and requested that a written description of this discharge be provided to your office by the close of business on September 10<sup>th</sup>. By way of telephone call with your office on September 10, 1999, it was agreed that the date for submission of the notification would be extended until close of business on September 13, 1999. This letter is being submitted in response to the request of Lee Winn.

As we have discussed in the past, construction of the new TA-53 RLW Treatment Plant (RLWTP) has been underway since January of this year. This new plant, consisting of above ground evaporative basins and related lift stations and piping, will replace the south impoundment formerly utilized by TA-53 for disposal of the radioactive liquid wastewater which resulted from operations at the site. As you are aware, the former impoundments have been included as a Potential Release Site (PRS) in Module VIII of the Los Alamos National Laboratory's Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permit and are currently being sampled as part of the RCRA Facility Investigation for these units. Construction of the new treatment plant is nearing completion and it is expected to be operational by the end of the calendar year.

The requirements for final construction of the new TA-53 RLWTP necessitate the performance of hydrostatic testing of lift stations and pumps in order to provide some verification that they



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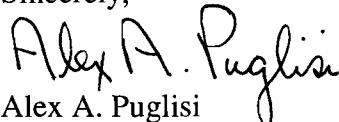
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will properly function when the system becomes operational and water is transferred to the new evaporative basins. When the TA-53, RLWTP project personnel first conducted this hydrostatic testing, water was pumped through an existing pipe into the south impoundment. The tests were performed in this manner because it most accurately provided a "best test" to simulate the normal operating conditions (e.g., head, backflow) that would be encountered when the lift stations were tied into the final section of piping leading to the new treatment plant.

The hydrostatic testing was performed on two lift stations over a period of four days during the month of August and ended on August 26th. It is estimated that a maximum volume of 5,000 gallons of water was discharged during that period. Only potable water obtained from a fire hydrant at the site was utilized for the hydrostatic tests. All discharges of water to the south impoundments have ceased.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at 667-4882.

Sincerely,



Alex A. Puglisi  
Hazardous and Solid Waste Group

AP/vh

Cy: J. Fraser, LANL, LANSCE-FM, and MS H814  
H. Plum, DOE-LAAO, MS A316  
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