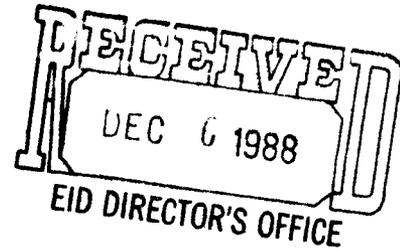




Department of Energy
Albuquerque Operations
Los Alamos Area Office
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544

John



DEC 05 1988

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Richard Mitzelfelt, Director
N. M. Environmental Improvement Division
P. O. Box 968
Santa Fe, NM 87504-0968

Dear Mr. Mitzelfelt:

This letter is intended to update the Environmental Improvement Division (EID) on activities planned by the Department of Energy (DOE) at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (the Laboratory) and to request EID's concurrence on two projects associated with the ongoing management of hazardous waste at the Laboratory. These projects have been previously discussed with EID (telephone conversation between John Gould, EID Hazardous Waste Program and Alice Barr, Health, Safety and Environment Division, Los Alamos National Laboratory, October 25, 1988). Mr. Gould advised that DOE request a formal determination from EID regarding these issues.

Specifically, the issues addressed in this letter are: (1) surveying and temporarily backfilling the two inactive evaporation pits at Technical Area (TA) 54, Area L that are referenced in the closure plans dated November 1986 and February 1988 for TA-54, Area L and TA-54 Waste Oil Tanks, respectively; and (2) the construction and use of a new, partially enclosed hazardous waste storage pad.

It is our intention to backfill the two evaporation pits at Area L with clean fill material. This action is being undertaken for two reasons: (1) to eliminate the intrusion of storm water into the vadose zone and thereby reduce the potential for contaminant migration, and (2) to eliminate a hazard that is created by the presence of open pits in an active work area. The pits will be surveyed for future reference to record the existing surface should re-excavation be deemed appropriate for closure purposes.

The second improvement planned at TA-54, Area L is the construction of a new heated hazardous waste storage area west of the existing sampling pad. This activity and the site location have been incorporated in the November 1988 amended Part A application as an increase in design capacity. This change will not alter the volume of waste in storage but rather the section at Area L where storage occurs. This area will address several operational issues that need improvement: (1) precipitation will no longer be able to enter the secondary containment structures in this area and, as this liquid is conservatively handled as hazardous waste, waste generation will be minimized; (2) a waste that requires sampling and also tends to freeze in the winter can be brought into the heated area to

TA-54

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Mr. Richard Mitzelfelt

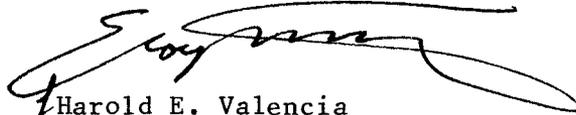
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thaw, thereby maintaining continuity in the Laboratory's off-site shipment program throughout the year; and (3) provide a covered staging area for shipment of waste to off-site commercial waste facilities.

This storage area will consist of a concrete pad curbed for secondary containment and an open "pole-barn" roof. The center portion of the storage area will be enclosed with 4 walls extending from the pad to the roof to retain heat. The roof will continue out on opposite sides of the enclosed section to provide covering for the existent secondary containment structure and the proposed staging area. It is anticipated that the pad will accommodate a total of 90 fifty-five gallon drums. Detailed drawings are currently being finalized as are modifications to the appropriate portions of the Part B application. This information will be forwarded to EID when complete.

If you have any questions regarding these matters, please call Donna Lacombe of my staff at 667-5288.

Sincerely,



Harold E. Valencia
Area Manager

1d1-071

cc:

A. Davis, US EPA, Dallas, Texas