

From: Tiska Blankenship [mailto:tiska@unm.edu]
Sent: Saturday, February 02, 2013 7:49 PM
To: Martin, David, NMENV; Kieling, John, NMENV
Subject: request a public hearing for Sandia Lab's Mixed Waste Landfill (dump).

Secretary David Martin

New Mexico Environment Department

David.Martin@state.nm.us

John Kieling, Chief

NMED Hazardous Waste Bureau

john.kieling@state.nm.us

Dear Secretary Martin and Mr. Kieling,

I request that the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) hold an evidentiary public hearing for the Long-Term Monitoring and Maintenance Plan (LTMMP) for the Sandia National Laboratories' Mixed Waste Landfill (MWL). Unresolved public concerns and technical issues must be fully examined.

The MWL is a dump located within the boundaries of Kirtland AFB with unlined pits and trenches above Albuquerque's drinking water aquifer. The dump received radioactive and hazardous wastes from nuclear weapons production from 1959 to 1988 - almost 30 years. Sandia intends to leave up to 1.5 million cu ft of these wastes under a dirt cover about one mile from the children's park at Mesa del Sol and near Isleta Pueblo. A report was kept secret from the public until 2009 to allow the cover to be installed. No dirt cover could provide enough protection.

Over one-hundredbarrels of long lived plutonium wastes are contained in the dump along with tons of depleted uranium, tritium, lead, beryllium, and solvents such as PCE, TCE and PCBs,. *The MWL dump wastes have already begun to enter the groundwater and are poorly monitored.* Nickel, chromium, cadmium and nitrates are in the groundwater. Cancer causing organic solvents are moving deeper beneath the MWL dump and are predicted to be in the groundwater by the Sandia Fate and Transport Computer Model.

The dump must be cleaned up now to avoid major aquifer contamination like that which has occurred from the jet fuel spill at Kirtland Air Force Base.

A reliable groundwater monitoring network has never been in place to acquire accurate data for making a decision to leave these wastes in place. The NMED, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other technical agencies have stated that the groundwater monitoring wells were put in the *wrong locations, improperly sampled, had corroded well screens, and contaminated with Bentonite clay that hides evidence of contamination*. Newer wells were improperly placed and drilled.

In 2010 the EPA Inspector General reported that EPA Region 6 technical staff withheld technical concerns from the public that the groundwater monitoring well network was defective. <http://www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2010/20100414-10-P-0100.pdf>

Sandia has not performed the required 5-year review for feasibility of excavation of the dump and the suitability of the dirt cover. The review is 2½ years overdue.

NMED should grant a public hearing for the Long Term Monitoring and Maintenance Plan and require performance of the 5 year review. This is a tragedy long in process and continues. Something must be done and soon. We need the public hearing.

Sincerely, Tiska Blankenship

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