

May 13, 2003

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

Fact Sheet



DOE Proposes Modification To Hazardous Waste Facility Permit

LANL Sealed Sources Waste Streams Headspace Gas Sampling and Analysis Requirements

Background The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has proposed a modification to its Hazardous Waste Facility Permit for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) to support DOE's national cleanup effort. This Class 2 permit modification request seeks to revise permit requirements for headspace gas sampling and analysis specific to waste streams at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The modification also includes added acceptable knowledge and visual examination requirements for these waste streams to ensure continued compliance with the Hazardous Waste Facility Permit. These proposed permit changes, submitted by DOE to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) on May 13, 2003, will not adversely affect worker safety, public health, or the environment. The NMED issued the original Hazardous Waste Facility Permit for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in October 1999.

What is Proposed? The LANL sealed sources waste streams are generated by the activities of the DOE Off-Site Source Recovery Project (OSRP) managed by LANL. The scope of the OSRP is to recover, transport, and store at LANL radioactive sealed sources that are not being used. A sealed source is defined by 10 CFR §30.4 and §70.4 as any special nuclear material or byproduct material that is encased in a capsule designed to prevent the leakage or escape of the special nuclear material or byproduct. DOE and predecessor agencies used these sealed-sources in applications that required high surface dose rates.

The permit modification request proposes to assign headspace gas volatile organic compound (VOC) concentration values, in lieu of headspace gas sampling and analysis. This would include radioactive sources that are sealed and certified as U.S. Department of Transportation special form

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radioactive material that do not contain VOCs. This modification request delineates the criteria for assigning VOC values in lieu of headspace gas sampling and analysis for characterizing waste containers with sealed sources. Compliance with the defined criteria must be determined and documented as part of the LANL acceptable knowledge record and the LANL visual examination technique.

This proposed Class 2 modification would allow LANL to safely manage and permanently dispose of these specific waste streams. This waste will meet all permit disposal criteria prior to being shipped to the WIPP facility. The proposed modifications will strengthen WIPP's mission to protect human health and the environment and speed the cleanup of radioactive materials from DOE facilities.

Comments

Comments for the record must be sent to Mr. Steve Zappe, New Mexico Environment Department, 2905 Rodeo Park Drive, Building 1, Santa Fe, NM 87505. They may also be e-mailed: steve_zappe@nmenv.state.nm.us or faxed to 505-428-2567. Only written comments will be accepted and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. MDT on July 14, 2003. A copy of the permit modification may be viewed or copied at the NMED offices of Mr. Zappe. To be placed on the WIPP mailing list, contact Mr. Zappe at the address above.

***For more
Information***

For more information about transuranic waste shipments and procedures, call the WIPP Information Center at 1-800-336-WIPP (9477). You also may visit the WIPP Home Page at <http://www.wipp.ws>. Comments to the Permittees regarding this permit modification may be sent to Mr. Bobby St. John, Washington TRU Solutions, P.O. Box 2078, Carlsbad, NM 88221.