



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
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ENTREPRENEUR

MAR 25 2014

RECEIVED

Jose R. Franco
Manager
U.S. Department of Energy
Carlsbad Field Office
P.O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221

MAR 28 2014

NMED
Hazardous Waste Bureau

RE: United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6 Approval of Request to Expand Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) Storage Time From 60 Days to 105 Days Due to Suspension of Normal Operations at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) located at Carlsbad, New Mexico (EPA I.D. No. NM4890139088).

Dear Mr. Franco:

We are in receipt of an email communication (copy enclosed) dated March 11, 2014, from Ms. Susan McCauslin of your staff to Mr. James Sales of my staff (Region 6 PCB Coordinator) requesting an emergency approval to expand storage time for PCB TRU and PCB TRU Mixed waste from 60 days, as required by the WIPP PCB Conditions of Approval (COA) dated May 21, 2013, Sections III.C. and III.D.5., to 105 days. After a review of the facts involved and considering the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Administrative Order (AO) dated February 27, 2014, your request for expanded storage of 105 days is hereby approved with the added condition that no new off-site generated PCB waste may be received at the WIPP until normal operations resume. These conditions are added, pursuant to condition III-B of our COA dated May 21, 2013, and 40 CFR 761.75(c)(3)(ii). We believe these conditions are necessary to ensure the landfill operations do not present an unreasonable risk of injury to health or to the environment.

In the email, it was reported that on February 5, 2014, the WIPP experienced a vehicle fire in the underground which required disposal operations to be temporarily halted. On February 14, 2014, the WIPP experienced a radiological incident. Until investigations and corrective actions have been completed, the WIPP will be unable to resume normal operations, which will require an emergency expansion of approved storage time. In order for EPA to stay informed of the WIPP's progress in resolving the storage issues, please send a copy of the weekly report you are required to submit to NMED (i.e., Item 14 of the AO) to the attention of Mr. James Sales, Region 6 PCB Coordinator, Mail Code 6PD-A.



Please contact me if you have questions, or have your staff contact Mr. Sales at (214) 665-6796.

Sincerely,



Wren Stenger

Director

Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division

Enclosure

cc: Trais Kliphuis, NMED

Sales, James

From: Susan McCauslin [susan.mccauslin@cbfo.doe.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 2:09 PM
To: Sales, James
Cc: Stone, Nick; George Basabilvazo - WIPPNet; George Hellstrom - WIPPNet; Klein, Thomas - RES
Subject: WIPP Conditions of Approval Waste Storage
Attachments: NMED Admin Order 2-14.pdf

Hi Jim,

As we discussed yesterday on the telephone, in accordance with sections III.C and III.D.5 of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Conditions of Approval (COA) dated May 21, 2013, the Department of Energy (DOE) would like to request an emergency approval to expand storage time of PCB TRU and PCB TRU Mixed waste at WIPP.

On February 5, 2014, the WIPP experienced a vehicle fire in the underground. The underground and all associated disposal operations were temporarily halted and all waste shipments from generator sites were suspended. An incident investigation was initiated to determine the cause and corrective actions for the vehicle fire. On February 14, 2014, the WIPP experienced a radiological incident in the underground. At this time the facility disposal operations were still halted from the February 5, 2014, incident. All waste in route to WIPP or that was received at WIPP prior to these incidents are currently being held in the approved storage areas on site.

Until both investigations and corrective action processes have been completed the WIPP will be unable to resume normal waste disposal activities. This is expected to be a protracted period of time. As a result, the DOE requests that the normal 60 day storage time allowed in the PCB COA be extended an additional 45 days for a total of 105 days. This additional 45 day time frame would be equal to the Administrative Order issued by the State of New Mexico on February 27, 2014 (attached) as it pertained to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste storage specifications of the state permit. If additional storage time is needed a separate request will be submitted.

Thank you for your consideration, and please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Susan E. McCauslin
Environmental Protection Specialist
U.S. Department of Energy Carlsbad Field Office
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