

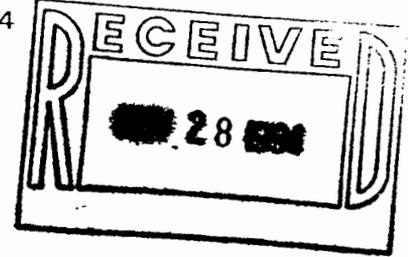
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Department of Energy
Los Alamos Area Office
Albuquerque Operations Office
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544

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CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Ms. Barbara Hoditschek
Permit Section Coordinator
Hazardous and Radioactive Materials
Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
525 Camino de los Marquez
P. O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

Dear Ms. Hoditschek:

This letter is to notify your office of the planned start-up of the Actinide Source-Term Test Program (STTP). During the initial presentation of the STTP to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) in Santa Fe on July 7, 1993, the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) agreed to provide notification prior to initiation of the STTP Test Phase. The STTP Test Phase will commence after the STTP test containers are loaded with waste at the Waste Characterization, Reduction, and Repackaging Facility (formerly the Size Reduction Facility) at Technical Area 50. The STTP experiment has not changed in scope since the initial presentation (July 7, 1993); a subsequent presentation and tour specifically for NMED and the New Mexico Environmental Evaluation Group (NMEEG) on February 14, 1994; and a presentation and tour to the National Research Council of the National Academies of Science and Engineering on April 6, 1994.

The start-up of the STTP is awaiting the final approval of the Environmental Assessment (EA) document and issuance of a Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The EA has been reviewed and approved by the Los Alamos Area Office; Albuquerque Operations Office; Headquarters (HQ) EM Groups through EM-1 (Tom Grumbly); and HQ EH-25. The EA has now been transmitted to four Indian Tribes, the State of New Mexico, NMEEG, and two public reading locations. Because it now appears that the EA is approaching final approval and a FONSI may be issued, LANL is providing NMED notification of potential STTP start-up in early November and initiation of the test phase in late November or early December 1994. LANL is conducting the STTP in collaboration with Sandia

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NOV 21 1994

Ms. Barbara Hoditschek 2

National Laboratories under the guidance of the DOE Carlsbad Area Office. However, all waste to be used for the STTP will come from within LANL, and no waste will be shipped from outside or off-site sources.

NMED will receive reports on the progress of the STTP once the test phase commences and data is generated. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please call Jon Mack of my staff at (505) 665-5026.

Sincerely,



Joseph C. Vozella
Acting Assistant Area Manager
Office of Environment and
Projects

LAAMEP:9JM-106

CC:

R. Villareal, MST-5, LANL,
MS-G730

T. Grieggs, ESH-19, LANL,
MS-K498

HSWG (94-0412) File, LANL,
MS-K498