



Environmental Protection Division
Water Quality & RCRA Group (ENV-RCRA)
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Date: December 7, 2011
 Refer To: ENV-RCRA-11-0223
 LAUR: 11-12140

Mr. Richard Powell
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Ms. Jennifer Fullam
 Groundwater Quality Bureau
 New Mexico Environment Department
 Harold Runnels Building, N2250
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 PO Box 26110
 Santa Fe, NM 87502

Dear Mr. Powell and Ms. Fullam:

**SUBJECT: LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY REQUEST FOR CLOSURE
 UNDER NMWQCC REGULATIONS; TA-21 MDA-B RELEASE**

Los Alamos National Laboratory's (LANL) Water Quality and RCRA Group (ENV-RCRA) notified the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) of a Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) release of approximately 5 gallons within an enclosure at TA-21 Material Disposal Area-B (MDA-B) (Release Database Report #280) on October 28, 2010 pursuant to the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission (NMWQCC) Regulations (20.6.2.1203 NMAC) and LANL's "*Discharge Reporting Guidance (Decision Tree)*" dated March 10, 2009. Seven and fifteen-day notifications were submitted to NMED and the Environmental Protection Agency on November 3, 2010 and November 11, 2010, respectively.

On the morning of October 27, 2010, two 55 gallon drums were unearthed at TA-21 MDA-B, within an excavation enclosure (Enclosure 12). MDA-B was being excavated as part of LANL's cleanup and remediation of Manhattan Project and Cold War waste. It appeared that approximately 5 gallons of clear liquid leaked from the drums into the soil. A white solid mixed with soil was also uncovered during the excavation. The enclosure was evacuated to ensure worker safety.

A recovery plan was developed that included removing the drums and placing them and the affected material in a waste bin for disposal pursuant to RCRA requirements. The white powder was placed on plastic sheeting pending analysis. Samples were taken of air, excavated material, residual liquid in the drums, and the white powder/soil. On the afternoon of October 27, 2010 a majority of the affected material and the drums were placed in a waste bin for disposal. Approximately 5 cubic yards of impacted material remained in the trench and was covered with soil. Operations in Enclosure 12 were shut down for approximately one week.

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Results of the sampling indicated that:

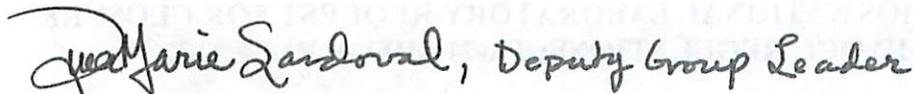
- The residual liquid in the drums was a calcium chloride/dust suppressant solution.
- Air results showed the chemicals detected were Ethyl Ether at 0.98 parts per million (ppm), Ethanol at 0.61 ppm, Toluene at 0.64 ppm, and all other detects were at 0.25 ppm or lower. All detections were below Short Term Exposure Limits (STEL).
- Soil results did not show evidence of high levels of organic contamination.
- The white powder/soil was determined to be contaminated with naphthalene.

Operations in Enclosure 12 were resumed on November 6, 2010 and the remaining 5 cubic yards of impacted soil was placed in the waste bin for disposal pursuant to RCRA requirements.

All corrective actions for this release have been completed. The Laboratory requests that NMED administratively close this release under the NMWQCC Regulations (20.6.2.1203 NMAC).

Please contact Jake Meadows at (505) 606-0185 if additional information would be helpful.

Sincerely,

 Maria Sandoval, Deputy Group Leader

for Anthony R. Grieggs
Group Leader
Water Quality & RCRA Group (ENV-RCRA)

ARG:JM/lm

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ENV-RCRA File, K490
IRM-RMMSO, A150