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Date: December 26, 2008
Refer To: EP2008-0650

James P. Bearzi, Bureau Chief
Hazardous Waste Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
Santa Fe, NM 87505-6303



Subject: Review of November 2008 Groundwater Data

Dear Mr. Bearzi:

The Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Water Stewardship Project (LWSP) met on December 11, 2008, to review new groundwater data received in November 2008. At that time, several groundwater samples were identified with contaminant concentrations above the New Mexico or federal water quality standards.

The LWSP program manager notified the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Hazardous Waste Bureau about these findings by telephone on December 11, 2008, and followed up with an email on the same day.

The four instances of a contaminant above a standard for the first time (based on samples collected since June 14, 2007) are tabulated in the attached report. Samples collected at these locations before June 14, 2007, also contained the same contaminants at concentrations above a standard, with the following exception:

- Methylene chloride was detected at 5.38 µg/L in an unfiltered sample collected at the City of Santa Fe Buckman well no. 1; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency maximum contaminant level is 5 µg/L. This compound is a common analytical laboratory contaminant and was found in several other groundwater and field quality control samples collected during this period.

This letter is our written submission that indicates in the accompanying report and tables the chemical constituents that meet the seven screening criteria laid out in the Compliance Order on Consent (the Consent Order), modified on May 13, 2008.

We would like to notify NMED of our discovery this month that our reporting program has not correctly identified data that meet the criteria 5 and 6 of the Consent Order, modified on May 13, 2008. These two criteria require us to identify cases where constituents exceed either 2 times the background level or one-half the standard and have increased for the third consecutive sampling event. We have made it a priority to correct this programming, and as soon as this occurs we will review data collected since June 14, 2007, and notify NMED of any unreported cases where criteria 5 and 6 are met. We will also review programming for the remaining criteria at the same time to ensure our reporting is complete.

If you have questions, please contact Ardyth Simmons at (505) 665-3935 (asimmons@lanl.gov) or David Gregory at (505) 667-5808 (dgregory@doeal.gov).

Sincerely,

Michael Graham, Associate Director
Environmental Programs
Los Alamos National Laboratory

Sincerely,

David R. Gregory, Project Director
Environmental Operations
Los Alamos Site Office

MG/DG/PH/AS/DR:sm

Enclosure: Report and accompanying tables: "Summary of New Los Alamos National Laboratory Groundwater Data Loaded in November 2008" (LA-UR-08-7795)

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