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Date: DEC 14 2011
Refer To: EP2011-0412

John Kieling, Acting Bureau Chief
Hazardous Waste Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
Santa Fe, NM 87505-6303

Subject: Request for Extension to Complete Ten Plugged and Abandoned Wells in 2011

Dear Mr. Kieling:

This letter requests an extension from the December 30, 2011, date for completion of 10 plugged and abandoned wells in 2011. This work was approved by the New Mexico Environment Department in its letter, Notice of Approval with Modifications (for the) Work Plans to Plug and Abandon Wells and Boreholes at Los Alamos National Laboratory, dated March 9, 2011.

Numerous technical difficulties have arisen in the past few weeks as this work was being executed. At this point, seven wells have been completed and two are in progress and may be completed before the end of the year. However, Los Alamos National Laboratory (the Laboratory) has encountered several problems that have prevented completion of the required 10 wells. For example, Seismic Hazard Borehole (SHB) 3 (completed) required casing-advance drilling because of significant and unexpected borehole instability. SHB-1 was broken off belowgrade during construction and had to be reopened. The distillation borehole at Technical Area 21 required additional work after it was damaged during construction. Test Hole 6 had an additional 8-in.-diameter casing string (not shown on the as-built drawings), discovered after the well was already plugged.

Therefore, the Laboratory requests a new date of February 15, 2012, to allow time to address these issues and properly abandon the last of these boreholes. The report on the plugging and abandonment activities will be submitted on March 31, 2012, per the approval letter.

If you have any questions, please contact Ted Ball at (505) 665-3996 (tedball@lanl.gov) or Woody Woodworth at (505) 665-5820 (lance.woodworth@nnsa.doe.gov).

Sincerely,

Michael J. Graham, Associate Director
Environmental Programs
Los Alamos National Laboratory

Sincerely,

George J. Rael, Assistant Manager
Environmental Projects Office
Los Alamos Site Office

MG/GR/CD/TB:sm

Cy: Laurie King, EPA Region 6, Dallas, TX
Steve Yanicak, NMED-DOE-OB, MS M894
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