Environmental Protection Division
Environmental Compliance Programs (ENV-CP)
PO Box 1663, K490
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545
(505) 667-0666

Date: September 29, 2014
Symbol: ENV-DO-14-0283
LA-UR: 14-27529
Locates Action No.: N/A

Mr. Stephen D. Pullen
Hazardous Waste Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
Santa Fe, NM 87505-6313

Dear Mr. Pullen:

Subject: Destruction of Unstable Hazardous Waste at TA-59, Los Alamos National Laboratory

On September 23, 2014, Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Environmental Protection Division Compliance and Permitting Group (ENV-CP) representative Gian Bacigalupa contacted you as the New Mexico Environment Department Hazardous Waste Bureau (NMED-HWB) on-duty representative regarding the need to conduct emergency treatment (detonation) of two canisters containing unstable nitrocellulose film at Technical Area (TA) 49. As stated in a letter dated September 23, 2014, NMED-HWB granted Emergency Authorization for treatment by detonation of the canisters containing the unstable nitrocellulose film. Destruction was conducted on the canisters in accordance with 20.4.1.900 NMAC, incorporating 40 CFR 270.1 (c)(3).

Two film canisters containing nitrocellulose film dated to 1944 were identified at TA-03-039 inside a vault for items of historical significance. The Security & Emergency Operations (SEO) Division, Emergency Response Group, was consulted to assess any imminent risks to human health and safety. The Emergency Response team was able to identify the film as containing nitrocellulose and determined that the flammable properties of nitrocellulose film posed a concerning safety risk. Emergency Response personnel determined that treatment by detonation of the two film canisters was a necessary response. The film canisters were safely removed and transported to TA-49 where two detonations were completed on September 23, 2014, in a controlled and safe manner. The two detonations occurred at 09:40 and 10:15, each using sixteen ounces of explosives to ensure the complete destruction of the hazardous nitrocellulose film.

The detonations completely consumed the nitrocellulose film. The remaining small metallic fragments of the film canisters will be disposed of appropriately.

Please contact Mark Haagenstad of my staff at (505) 665-2014 if any additional information is desired.

Sincerely,

Anthony R. Grieggs
Group Leader
Environmental Compliance Programs (ENV-CP)
Los Alamos National Security, LLC

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