



Department of Energy
Carlsbad Field Office
P. O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221

JUL 07 2014

Mr. John E. Kieling, Bureau Chief
Hazardous Waste Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
Santa Fe, NM 87508-6303

Mr. Tom Blaine, Division Director
Environmental Health Division
Harold Runnels Building
1190 Saint Francis Drive, Room 4050
Santa Fe, NM 87502-5469

Subject: Supplement to Report of Implementation of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Facility Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Contingency Plan on April 11, 2014

Dear Mr. Kieling and Mr. Blaine:

On April 11, 2014, the Department of Energy (DOE) Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) and Nuclear Waste Partnership LLC (NWP), Co-Permittees of Hazardous Waste Facility Permit (NM4890139088-TSDF), implemented the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Contingency Plan (Plan) and filed a report with the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) on April 28, 2014, documenting implementation of the Plan. The implementation of the Plan was in anticipation of investigation of the source of a radiological release from the facility that occurred on February 14, 2014.

The purpose of this letter is to provide the NMED with supplemental information collected since the report was filed. This information has been obtained through numerous entries into the areas affected by the event and the interpretation of video and sampling data.

We certify under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under our direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on our inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of our knowledge and belief, true, accurate, and complete. We are aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. George T. Basabilvazo at (575) 234-7488.

Sincerely,

Original Signatures on File

Jose R. Franco, Manager
Carlsbad Field Office

Robert L. McQuinn, Project Manager
Nuclear Waste Partnership LLC

Enclosure

cc: w/enclosure
T. Kliphuis, NMED *ED
CBFO M&RC
*ED denotes electronic distribution

Supplement to Report of Implementation of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Facility Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Contingency Plan on April 11, 2014

On April 11, 2014, the Department of Energy (DOE) Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) and Nuclear Waste Partnership LLC (NWP), Co-permittees (Permittees) of Hazardous Waste Facility Permit (NM4890139088-TSDF), implemented the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Contingency Plan, and on April 28, 2014, filed a report with the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) documenting implementation of the RCRA Contingency Plan. The implementation of the RCRA Contingency Plan was in anticipation of investigation of the source of a radiological release from the facility that occurred on February 14, 2014.

At the time of the report, the Permittees had not yet obtained information regarding the cause of the radiological release. Since that time, the Permittees have been performing a number of reentries into the disposal area of Panel 7 Room 7 attempting to identify the cause of the release. These reentries have involved the use of a video camera. Based upon the information that has been observed during the most recent entries, the Permittees have determined that the referenced report should be supplemented in accordance with Permit Section 1.7.15, Other Information. Some of this information has been previously reported as the result of routine phone conversations with the NMED. Additionally, the May 20, 2014 NMED Administrative Order WIPP 05-20001 and May 30, 2014 Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Nitrate Salt Bearing Waste Container Isolation Plan provide some updated information regarding the event.

The date, time, and type of incident (e.g., fire, explosion, or release)

Based upon video obtained during the entries since May 15, 2014, it has been determined that a drum located in a seven-pack assembly of 55-gallon drums located in Row 16 Column 4 top of the waste stack, shows evidence of a thermal reaction that has damaged the waste container and resulted in a possible release of transuranic waste. The reason for the thermal reaction continues to be investigated. Plans are underway to perform video investigations beyond Row 16 up to Row 1 to determine if any other containers have been breached and to determine if there was something other than the contents of the affected container that could have initiated the thermal reaction.

The name and quantity of material(s) involved

Based upon the recent entries into the area and videos that were taken of the affected area, the Permittees have identified the drum that was damaged as LA00000068660 originating from Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) waste stream LA MIN.02-V.001. This drum contains nitrate salts and is part of a seven-pack containing 2 dunnage drums and waste drums LA00000068333, LA00000068607, LA00000068630, and LA00000068670. These drums are also from waste stream LA MIN.02-V.001. The EPA hazardous waste numbers associated with

these containers that were provided by LANL, the generator, at the time of characterization, included D004, D005, D006, D007, D008, D009, D010, D011, D018, D019, D021, D022, D035, D038, D039, D040, F001, F002, and F005.

Because the video shows evidence of a thermal reaction in drum LA00000068660, pending receipt of additional information, the Permittees are provisionally applying the hazardous waste number D001 to drum LA00000068660. At this time, drum LA00000068660 is the only waste container that has been assigned the D001 hazardous waste number. The Permit Section 2.3.3.7 specifies that wastes exhibiting the characteristic of ignitability, corrosivity, or reactivity (EPA Hazardous Waste Numbers of D001, D002, or D003) are not acceptable at the WIPP facility.

An assessment of actual or potential hazards to human health or the environment, where this is applicable

On May 2, 2014, the Permittees suspended the authorization for certification of certain waste streams, including LA MIN.02-V.001. This halted shipment of additional containers of these wastes from LANL. This action was taken to protect human health and the environment. There are 368 additional containers of waste from this waste stream disposed of at the WIPP facility in Panel 7, Room 7, and Panel 6, Rooms 1 and 2. The Permittees and LANL have initiated investigations to determine if these other nitrate salt-bearing waste containers have the potential to exhibit any additional RCRA characteristics.

On May 20, 2014, the NMED ordered the Permittees to prepare and submit for approval a plan to isolate the disposed nitrate bearing salt waste by closing Panel 7, Room 7, and Panel 6 in order to protect human health and the environment. The Permittees responded to the Order by preparing the WIPP Nitrate Salt Bearing Waste Isolation Plan which was submitted to the NMED on May 30, 2014. The Permittees are awaiting approval of this plan and are making preparations to close these areas of the underground facility.