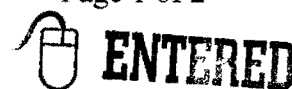


Per



Kieling, John, NMENV

From: Tiska Blankenship [tiska@unm.edu]
Sent: Sunday, May 02, 2010 11:47 AM
To: Kieling, John, NMENV
Subject: Regarding ground water monitoring at Los Alamos

John E. Kieling, Program Manager
Hazardous Waste Bureau - New Mexico Environment Department
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505-6303
E-mail: john.kieling@state.nm.us

Re: Lack of Groundwater Protection Requirements in Proposed Hazardous Waste Permit for Los Alamos National Laboratory

Dear Mr. Kieling:

I send you the following public comments about the lack of groundwater protection requirements in the proposed Hazardous Waste Permit for Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL).

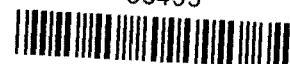
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated the Española Basin as a sole source aquifer, meaning that the Española Basin is the sole drinking water source for the area between the Jemez and Sangre de Cristo Mountains, running from Tres Piedras, to the north, to almost Galisteo, to the south.

I understand that since operations began in 1943, LANL has buried over 21 million cubic feet of radioactive, hazardous and toxic wastes in unlined pits, trenches and shafts dug into the volcanic tuff. The LANL groundwater monitoring network has been under development since 1998 and has yet to provide reliable and representative samples of groundwater from the regional aquifer.

I am particularly concerned about the lack of detection and compliance groundwater monitoring for the "regulated units," Areas G, H and L, at Technical Area 54 (TA-54). I quote the March 19, 2010 written testimony by James Bearzi, Bureau Chief of the NMED Hazardous Waste Bureau: "... groundwater contamination has already been detected beneath the regulated units at TA-54" p. 62.

Groundwater beneath LANL discharges to the springs at the Rio Grande. Albuquerque residents are already drinking water from the Rio Grande and Santa Fe residents will begin next spring. This is very alarming to me!! The reports show that our tap water contains Plutonium, Americium, Radium & Tritium, among many other radionuclides and chemicals. The Water Authority believes that these toxins in the river are coming from Los Alamos. I live down river, and I am very concerned about these toxic chemicals!

NMED must require LANL to install wells drilled only with air. These wells must be able to



detect contamination and provide the necessary information in order to implement corrective action, or "cleanup," in an efficient and cost effective manner. Already too much taxpayer money has been wasted drilling defective wells, collecting and analyzing samples from defective wells and reporting data to the public that is unreliable.

Regarding environmental justice, I urge you to know and remember that poor people cannot afford to move out of toxic environments or buy expensive air and water filters. In fact, none of us should have to buy these filters. As you may know, there is an epidemic of cancer and diseases such as asthma and other immune system disorders. Real prevention of disease involves not producing these toxic chemicals in the first place; however, if they do exist, they need to be safely and carefully contained. The precautionary principle should be applied.

I would also like to see NMED be more timely and diligent and deny Los Alamos National Lab (LANL) the permit to continue burning hazardous waste in the open air. This is because LANL has been a blatant polluter of our air, water and earth. Fining LANL does not seem to be effective, per their neglect of environmental stewardship. Denying the permit is one way to protect us. Please put an end to their negligence, please . . .

Thank you for your careful consideration of my comments and serious concerns.

Sincerely,

Tiska Blankenship
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