



Excavation on slope at potential release site 03-056(c)

LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY

Los Alamos National Laboratory (the Laboratory) is a multidisciplinary research facility owned by the Department of Energy (DOE) and managed by the University of California. The Laboratory is located in north-central New Mexico approximately 20 miles northwest of Santa Fe. The Laboratory covers 43 square miles of the Pajarito Plateau; the Plateau consists of a series of finger-like mesas that are separated by deep canyons containing perennial and intermittent streams running from west to east.

RISK REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PROJECT

The Laboratory's Environmental Restoration (ER) Project (implemented by the Risk Reduction and Environmental Stewardship [RRES] Division) is a part of a DOE nationwide program. DOE's environmental restoration efforts began in 1989. The ER Project investigates whether hazardous chemicals and/or radioactive wastes are present as a result of past Laboratory operations and cleans up and restores such sites as needed.

VOLUNTARY CORRECTIVE ACTION

POTENTIAL RELEASE SITE (PRS) 03-056(c)

REMOVAL OF PCB-CONTAMINATED SOIL

The purpose of the VCA was to remove from PRS 03-056(c) any soil that contained greater than 1 ppm polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). This site was a storage area located northeast of the Johnson Controls Utilities Shop (Technical Area (TA)-3-223). The Laboratory's electrical power line maintenance contractor has used the area for storage of electric cable, unused dielectric oils, PCB-containing transformers, capacitors, and oil-filled drums. The contractor also stored drums containing solvents at the site from 1967 to 1992.

Chemicals of Potential Concern

Personnel completed an expedited cleanup at this site in 1995, removing 1,000 yd³ of soil. Verification sampling indicated PCBs at concentrations greater than the EPA prescribed cleanup level of less than 1 ppm. Other chemicals of concern at the site included mercury and tetrachloroethene.

- 1940s** The Laboratory was founded in 1943 as part of the Manhattan Project. Processes used to carry out the Laboratory's past and present missions involve the use of hazardous and radioactive materials.
- 1950s** During and after World War II, materials were disposed of on the Laboratory site or otherwise released into the environment.
- 1960s** Congress enacted basic legislation to protect the environment. The Department of Energy's predecessor, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the Laboratory began to conduct surveys and to clean up areas where spills and disposal had occurred.
- 1970s** Congress enacted the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) that governs the day-to-day operations of hazardous waste generation, treatment, storage, and disposal facilities (sites).
- 1980s** Congress amended RCRA by passing the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments (HSWA). HSWA prescribes a corrective action process that focuses primarily on the investigation and cleanup, if required, of inactive sites.
- 1989** Environmental restoration began at the Laboratory to clean up sites that were formerly involved in weapons research and production.
- 1990s** The ER Project investigates
- Present** and cleans up sites that have the potential to affect human health or the environment.

INFORMATION SHEET: POTENTIAL RELEASE SITE 03-056(c)

ACCOMPLISHMENTS DESCRIPTION During FY 2001, personnel

- Removed and disposed of approximately 2,400 yd³ of PCB contaminated soil from the site. This included removing all sediments from the stream banks on the west slope area and from two drainages in the north area. The west slope, mesa top, and north slope were excavated down to bedrock.
- Collected 86 verification samples from a predetermined hexagonal grid and submitted them for PCB analysis. A subset (20 samples) were also submitted for VOC and metal analysis.
- Completed site restoration activities at the site. Activities included transporting approximately 1000 cubic yards of fill to the site to restore the mesa top. The mesa top was recontoured, drainage to the west slope was established, and gabion baskets were installed in the area where the drainage was re-directed to the west slope. The fill in the mesa top was compacted to engineering specifications and the mesa top area was paved and fencing installed. The north slope was stabilized and the exposed swage line was covered. Several areas were re-seeded, and jute matting was installed in the north slope.
- A VCA Report was drafted, peer-reviewed, completed, and submitted to EPA and NMED. The outcome of the corrective action is that all available data from environmental investigations at this site indicate that there are no chemicals of potential concern present at this site in concentrations that pose an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment.

For these reasons additional investigation or remediation activities are unwarranted and this site was recommended for no further action (NFA) in the VCA Report.



Potential Release Site 03-056(c) after cleanup activities

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Contact the Communications & Outreach Team

Carmen M. Rodriguez
Phone: (505) 665-6770
Fax: (505) 665-7369
Email Address: carmenr@lanl.gov

Web site: <http://erproject.lanl.gov>