



## Nevada Site Office News

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## **NNSA Releases Environmental Monitoring Report**

The National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Site Office (NNSA/NSO) released the *Nevada Test Site Annual Site Environmental Report 2004*. According to the report only trace amounts of radioactivity attributed to historical testing activities were detected off the NTS. No radioactivity from current activities was detected off-site. The report, published in October 2005, includes monitoring conducted by Bechtel Nevada, the management and operations contractor at the Nevada Test Site for the NNSA, and the Community Environmental Monitoring Program under direction of the Desert Research Institute of the University and College System of Nevada.

Bruce Hurley, Nevada Site Office environmental monitoring program manager, noted the environmental monitoring results once again are evidence that activities at the Nevada Test Site are being conducted in a manner that safeguards workers and the environment.

Bechtel Nevada oversees the onsite environmental surveillance on the Nevada Test Site. During calendar year 2004, onsite air monitoring samples were collected and analyzed for tritium and other man-made radionuclides. The only detected release from current NTS activities was a trace amount of tritium, significantly below any regulatory standards, used in radiological detection equipment calibration process at a laboratory on the NTS. As in past years, several man-made radionuclides from legacy contamination were measured in air samples at levels above their minimum detectable concentrations. These were attributed to the resuspension of contamination in surface soils from legacy sites and to the evaporation and transpiration of tritium from the soil, plants, and containment ponds at legacy sites. Monitoring also included water samples from onsite supply wells, drinking water distribution systems, and selected off-site water sources analyzed for radioactivity. All water samples were found to be in conformance with standards in the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations (40 CFR 141) and the U.S. Department of Energy Order 5400.5 (DOE 1990b).

Off-site monitoring for airborne radioactivity and weather conditions is conducted by the Community Environmental Monitoring Program composed of 26 stations surrounding the Nevada Test Site. Only trace amounts of radioactivity were detected at any of the monitoring stations. The origin of this radioactivity is primarily from natural background sources, such as radon and naturally occurring uranium in the earth. Each station is operated by local citizens, including science teachers, farmers, and ranchers, trained to independently verify the results of the environmental monitoring.

The monitors are knowledgeable spokespersons on subjects ranging from radiation detection to identification of environmental concerns of people in their communities. For more information about the monitoring program, visit the web site at <http://www.cemp.dri.edu/cemp.html>.

The report is available in the NNSA's Public Reading Facility located at 755 East Flamingo Road, Las Vegas, NV, as well as the Nevada Site Office website at <http://www.nv.doe.gov>.