

Weather



www.weather.com

Sections

Home Page
 News
 Sports
 Features
 Obituaries
 Classifieds
 Classifieds Form
 Comments
 Letters
 Editorials
 Police Beat
 Business Directory
 Archive Search
 Kids Korner
 Contact Us
 Subscribe
 Lab Link
 Los Alamos County

lamonitor.com

The Online News Source for Los Alamos

Monday, June 6, 2005

Headline News

DOE to sample airport ash site
 DARRYL NEWMAN, Monitor Staff Writer

The Department of Energy is scheduled to begin sampling an old ash pile near the Los Alamos Airport next week, heralding a new era in the cleanup process involving the county and the New Mexico Environmental Department.

The sampling effort is a first step in the development of a work plan that will eventually be approved by the NMED and the county. DOE will conduct the sampling to identify the composition of the ash and determine the best method for its removal off the disposal site, which dates back to the 1940s.

The work will be executed by Innovative Technical Solutions, a contractor with DOE. Sampling is slated to begin Monday and run four to five days, said Bernard Pleau, public affairs specialist with the National Nuclear Safety Administration.

The legacy Solid Waste Management Unit is located on the north-facing slope of Pueblo Canyon, several hundred feet northwest of the airport. The old ash pile is approximately 150 feet wide and another 150 feet below the mesa top.

The work plan is expected to be delivered to the NMED by May 31. A public meeting will be held to discuss the cleanup process once the sampling is completed and the DOE reviews the results, Pleau said.

"We will discuss the removal activity options," he said. "We want to let the public know of the path forward." The location, date and time of the public meeting will be announced following the approval of the work plan.

The DOE is expecting to remove approximately 4,500 cubic yards of ash debris material from the site with the topography of a steep canyon wall, which will present unique technical challenges, Pleau said.



The old disposal site is the result of incinerator operations that were last active in 1947. The waste primarily consisted of office and municipal waste that was burned in the old incinerator building, located just northwest of the airport.

The area is clearly marked and road access to the site is restricted. The site is one of two that is scheduled for clean up as part of the Land Transfer Project in which DOE is gradually contributing some of its land holdings to the county.

"We are pleased that the lab and DOE are continuing their commitment to clean up sites as well as parcels that are slated for transfer to the county," County Administrator Max Baker said this morning.

Previously, DOE representatives proposed and received approval from the NMED to collect and cap the solid waste on the landfill sites.

For additional information, call Pleau at 667-6691 or e-mail him at bpleau@doeal.gov.

 [printable version](#)
 [e-mail this story](#)