



Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Authority

Albuquerque/Bernalillo
County
Government Center
One Civic Plaza
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Legislation Text

File #: R-15-7, Version: 1

ALBUQUERQUE BERNALILLO COUNTY WATER UTILITY AUTHORITY

BILL NO. R-15-7

RESOLUTION

Requesting the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to Respond to Claims Regarding High-Level Waste in the Mixed Waste Landfill at the Sandia National Laboratory

WHEREAS, The Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (Water Authority) is concerned about the quality of the source waters that provide Albuquerque with its drinking water;

WHEREAS, the Water Authority's Water Protection Advisory Board (WPAB) has listed the solid waste management unit at the DOE's Sandia National Laboratory known as the Mixed Waste Landfill (MWL) as one of its top areas of focus for water quality protection in the Middle Rio Grande Basin;

WHEREAS, the environmental advocacy group Citizen Action New Mexico (CANM) has made public the following assertions regarding the MWL:

1. CANM asserts that it is unique and will remain extremely dangerous to Albuquerque residents for millennia to come if the wastes are not excavated, properly stored and disposed of in a deep geologic repository;
2. CANM asserts that Sandia's records show that the MWL contains 119 barrels of plutonium- and americium-contaminated waste; tons of depleted uranium; and high-level mixed nuclear wastes from nuclear reactor meltdown experiments, nuclear weapons testing, and the 1979 nuclear accident Three Mile Island;
3. CANM asserts that Sandia management memoranda from 1997 to 2001, along with thousands of radioactive and hazardous waste disposal sheets, state that canisters containing metallic sodium and high-level nuclear waste were disposed of in shallow pits and trenches at the MWL;

4. CANM asserts that Metallic sodium is explosive in the presence of water, so there is the potential for an explosion causing a breach in the MWL's dirt cover and spread radiation into Albuquerque's air and groundwater;

5. CANM asserts that Sandia's own records show that the MWL is leaking radioactive waste, solvents and heavy metals from shallow, unlined pits and trenches into Albuquerque's drinking water aquifer;

6. CANM asserts that High-level nuclear waste such as that buried at MWL requires deep geological disposal in an engineered facility, not shallow disposal in unlined pits and trenches;

7. CANM asserts that MWL's buried wastes lie above Albuquerque's aquifer stored in plastic bags, cardboard boxes, steel drums, canisters that will eventually decay and corrode;

8. CANM asserts that Groundwater monitoring for the MWL dump has been inadequate and does not support the decision to leave the wastes under a dirt cover;

9. CANM asserts that No complete inventory of the MWL wastes was made;

10. CANM asserts that Sandia possesses the technology to safely excavate and store the MWL wastes.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WATER AUTHORITY:

Section 1. Direct the WPAB to request a presentation and response from U.S Department of Energy (DOE) to CANM's assertions at a future meeting of the WPAB and the Water Authority and follow-up as appropriate within ninety (90) days.