

**TALKING POINTS RELATED TO MIXED WASTE LANDFILL  
PERMIT MODIFICATION HEARING  
Prepared by Citizen Action**

**November 30, 2004**

Attached are three talking point items for your consideration in making statements at the Mixed Waste Landfill Public Hearing beginning December 2 at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center on Carlisle Blvd. north of I-40. They include: 1) A brief statement of Citizen Action's objectives; 2) Mixed Waste Landfill - Why Clean Up?; and 3) Agenda for Meeting with Governor's Environment/Energy Advisor.

**1) Citizen Action's objective:** Citizen Action is pushing for cleanup - by excavation, treatment and disposal of the waste in a well-designed disposal cell on site rather than covering the waste as it lies and monitoring until leaks are detected, based on the state and federal requirement to minimize or eliminate the release hazardous materials.

**2) Mixed Waste Landfill: WHY CLEAN UP?**

- To protect Albuquerque's sole source aquifer from potential contamination and protect declining groundwater resources.
- Just a matter of time before buried containers holding waste will rust or break over time releasing contaminants into environment (CWL example).
- Opens land up to unrestricted future land usage, controlled growth, and increased land values.
- Development of new technologies that can be used to clean up hundreds of other DOE waste sites across the nation.
- Sets a precedent for clean up of similar waste sites at Los Alamos National Laboratory that are releasing contaminants into groundwater, surface waters and the Rio Grande.
- Decreases risks of cancer and other illnesses to surrounding communities over the long-term.
- To unload future generations of the burden of cleaning up environmental contamination created as a result of nuclear weapons production during the Cold War years.
- To illustrate pure Sandia "can-do" engineering: characterize the site, dig it up, sort out, identify, characterize the buried material, and recycle as much of the material as possible.

### 3) Agenda for Meeting with Governor's Energy/Environment Advisor

Policy Recommendations regarding  
Clean-up of the Mixed Waste Landfill (MWL) at Sandia National Laboratories  
May 7, 2004

- 1) New Mexico must institute a full clean-up of the MWL as soon as possible unless a trust fund sufficient to assure delayed clean-up - based on the model of an agreement between the State of Tennessee and DOE (signed by then-Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson) in 1999 for a mixed waste landfill located at the Oak Ridge DOE facility is established.
- 2) Insuring effective implementation of this solution requires the Governor's involvement because the trust fund agreement involves both political and regulatory activities.
- 3) Sandia is the DOE facility next to the largest community in New Mexico and one that has proven capable of contamination the aquifer on which Albuquerque depends, New Mexico should insure that sufficient resources are available to support a strong and pro-active role to guarantee the elimination of potential releases.
- 4) Full clean-up instituted as soon as possible means development of a clean-up plan that includes fully independent cost estimates, full worker protection, and risk estimates followed by clean-up activities set forth on a firm and enforceable schedule.
- 5) Potential environmental and health impacts resulting from unknown waste volumes and mixtures in the MWL and the recently disclosed "yard holes" show the need for the State to be strongly assertive regarding investigation and clean up actions at Sandia.

#### Supporting Information

Available on the Internet:

1) Oak Ridge Model Described in detail in *Citizen Action Report: [Is 'Trust Us, We're the Government' Really A Guarantee? A Review of Financial Assurance Options for long-term Stewardship at the Mixed Waste Landfill, Sandia National Laboratories](http://www.mtafund.org/prodlib/newmexico/New_Mexico3.pdf)*, By W. Paul Robinson, Research Director, Southwest Research and Information Center at:  
[http://www.mtafund.org/prodlib/newmexico/New\\_Mexico3.pdf](http://www.mtafund.org/prodlib/newmexico/New_Mexico3.pdf)

Including: "State, DOE sign cleanup pact", The Oak Ridger Online, Oak

Ridge, Tennessee, November 2, 1999 by Larissa Brass, at:  
[http://www.oakridger.com/stories/110299/new\\_1102990023.html](http://www.oakridger.com/stories/110299/new_1102990023.html)

2) Analysis and Recommendations regarding DOE's proposed MLW Permit Modification at: <http://www.radfreenm.com/pages/keyissues.htm#comments>

Comments re: the Class 3 Draft Permit Modification for the Mixed Waste Landfill

- [Covering Up 30 Years of Radioactive and Hazardous Waste: Mixed Waste Landfill](http://www.radfreenm.com/pdf_docs/comments_covering.pdf) at:

[http://www.radfreenm.com/pdf\\_docs/comments\\_covering.pdf](http://www.radfreenm.com/pdf_docs/comments_covering.pdf)

- [Analysis and Recommendations Mixed Waste Landfill Corrective Measure Study Final Report U.S. Department of Energy and Sandia National Laboratories](http://www.radfreenm.com/pdf_docs/comments_mwl.pdf) at:

[http://www.radfreenm.com/pdf\\_docs/comments\\_mwl.pdf](http://www.radfreenm.com/pdf_docs/comments_mwl.pdf)

- [Independent Evaluation of the Corrective Measures Study, Mixed Waste Landfill, Sandia National Laboratories.](http://www.radfreenm.com/pdf_docs/comments_rwma.pdf) at:

[http://www.radfreenm.com/pdf\\_docs/comments\\_rwma.pdf](http://www.radfreenm.com/pdf_docs/comments_rwma.pdf)

3) "Yard Holes": "Your Home for Nuclear Waste," "Albuquerque Alibi," April 29, 2004 By Ryan Floersheim at:

[http://www.alibi.com/editorial/section\\_display.php?di=2004-04-29&scn=news#7947](http://www.alibi.com/editorial/section_display.php?di=2004-04-29&scn=news#7947)

4) "Cash for Cleanups," Albuquerque Tribune, January 8, 2004 by Paul Robinson at:

[http://www.abqtrib.com/archives/opinions04/010804\\_opinions\\_waste.shtml](http://www.abqtrib.com/archives/opinions04/010804_opinions_waste.shtml)

5) "Nuke landfill isn't good for health or for business," Albuquerque Tribune, January 13, 2004 by V. B. Price at:

[http://www.abqtrib.com/opinions04/041304\\_opinions\\_price.shtml](http://www.abqtrib.com/opinions04/041304_opinions_price.shtml)

6) "Sandia's Classified Waste Landfill project uncovers artifacts of Labs' early days," Sandia Lab News, May 7, 1999 at:

[http://www.sandia.gov/LabNews/LN05-07-99/landfill\\_story.htm](http://www.sandia.gov/LabNews/LN05-07-99/landfill_story.htm)

Including: *"The driver for cleaning up the Classified Waste Landfill wasn't philosophy or history, it was pure unadulterated weapons-lab-brand pragmatism: 'We've got a situation -- buried classified wastes pose potential problems of an unknown dimension -- and we've got to address that situation. And the solution? Pure Sandia can-do engineering: characterize the site, dig it up, sort out, identify, and characterize the buried material, and demilitarize*

*and recycle as much of the material as possible. That, in a nutshell, is what the project is all about. Straightforward. No philosophical musings; no pondering of historical significance. But still, it intrigues.' ”*

Not currently available on the Internet:

- 1) Letter from the Elite 25 real estate agents to Governor Bill Richardson, August 20, 2003, requesting clean up of MWL.
- 2) "Hot Property, Cold War Waste: Local Realtors push for Sandia Lab clean up of possible nuclear waste near prime real estate," Weekly Alibi, Sept. 18-23, 2003.
- 3) "FOIA document yields new discoveries: Numerous 'yard holes' at SNL contain nuclear reactor waste." Press release, Citizen Action, April 15, **2004**.