



Livermore Site Office News

News Media Contact

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CHANGE IN NITRATE TREATMENT AT THE BUILDING 829-SOURCE TREATMENT FACILITY AT LAWRENCE LIVERMORE NATIONAL LABORATORY'S SITE 300 EXPLAINED:

Livermore, CA - The U.S. Department of Energy/National Nuclear Security Administration has completed an Explanation of Significant Difference report for nitrate treatment at the Building 829-Source ground water extraction and treatment facility in the High Explosives Process Area Operable Unit at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's Site 300.

As required under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, an Explanation of Significant Difference is required because a significant, but not fundamental change is proposed to the final cleanup remedy for the High Explosives Process Area Operable Unit described in the Record of Decision for Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's Site 300.

The Explanation of Significant Difference documents a change in treatment technology for nitrate in ground water at the Building 829-Source ground water treatment facility located in the High Explosives Process Area Operable Unit. The Explanation of Significant Difference explains the decision to use ion-exchange treatment media to remove nitrate from extracted ground water rather than the existing bio-treatment unit. This change is being implemented because:

1. The ion-exchange media is effectively removing nitrate to meet effluent discharge limits, rendering the bio-treatment unit unnecessary.
2. The bio-treatment unit is impractical under the operational conditions at the facility.
3. Elimination of the bio-treatment unit is expected to increase the overall operational efficiency of the treatment facility.

The change in the nitrate treatment technology will not alter the protectiveness or outcome of the remedy (i.e., expected time to achieve cleanup objectives.) Approval of the Explanation of Significant Difference allows this remedy to continue until the ground water at this location is remediated.

The final Explanation of Significant Difference report is available to the public at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory Environmental Repository in the Tracy Public Library, 20 East Eaton Avenue, Tracy, CA 95377 [tel. (209) 835-2221]; the Laboratory Discovery Center, Greenville Road at East Gate Drive, Livermore, CA 94551, [tel. (925) 422-4599]; and online at <http://www-envirinfo.llnl.gov/>.

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's Site 300 is a U.S. Department of Energy experimental test facility used for the research, development, and testing of high explosive materials. Site 300 is located in the Altamont Hills between Livermore and Tracy, California. Site 300 was placed on the National Priorities List in 1992. A Site-Wide Record of Decision signed in 2008 established cleanup remedies and cleanup standards for the High Explosives Process Area Operable Unit. Technical operations at the High Explosives Process Area Operable Unit, which began in the late 1950s, involves the chemical formulation, mechanical pressing, and machining of high explosive compounds into shaped detonation devices. These devices are used in explosive experiments conducted at Site 300. Contaminants such as volatile organic compounds, nitrate, perchlorate, and high explosive compounds have been released to the environment from past operations.

For further information, the public may contact:
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