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Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
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DEC 28 1998

Mr. Steve M. Alexander
Perimeter Areas Section Manager
Nuclear Waste Program
State of Washington
Department of Ecology
1315 W. Fourth Avenue
Kennewick, Washington 99336-6018

Mr. Douglas R. Sherwood
Hanford Project Manager
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
712 Swift Boulevard, Suite 5
Richland, Washington 99352-0539



Dear Messrs. Alexander and Sherwood:

DETECTION OF PERCHLOROETHYLENE (PCE) IN 316-5 PROCESS TRENCHES MONITORING WELLS

This letter provides notification that tetrachloroethene (or PCE) has been detected in several wells monitoring the 316-5 Process Trenches and 300-FF-5 Operable Unit (OU). The 316-5 Process Trenches is a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) facility within the 300-FF-1 and 300-FF-5 OU's.

PCE was first detected above the maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 5 ug/L in three samples collected from well 399-1-17A during May 1998. PCE was detected at or above the MCL in samples collected from wells 399-1-17A and 399-1-16A in June, July, and August 1998. PCE was also detected above the MCL in samples collected from wells 399-1-10A and 399-1-16A in September 1998. These three wells monitor the 316-5 Process Trenches. The highest concentration was 38 ug/L in well 399-1-17A in July 1998; the concentration decreased to 10 ug/L in August 1998, and to 4 ug/L in September 1998. The next scheduled groundwater sampling for 316-5 Process Trenches is in December 1998.

PCE was also detected above the MCL in samples collected in August 1998 (an annual sample event) from other 300 Area wells that monitor the 300-FF-5 OU or are sampled for sitewide environmental surveillance. These wells are 399-1-3, 399-2-1, and 399-2-2, which are located between the 316-5 Process Trenches and the Columbia River.

Results of PCE analyses from 300 Area wells sampled in 1998 are provided in the attached table.

The existing RCRA Groundwater Monitoring Plan for 316-5 Process Trenches and the existing Operation and Maintenance Plan for the 300-FF-5 OU do not identify PCE as a contaminant of concern. However, PCE will continue to be analyzed in future groundwater samples that require volatile organic analysis according to these existing plans.

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Messrs. Alexander and Sherwood

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If you have any questions, please contact me at 373-9630.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marvin J. Furman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marvin" being the most prominent.

Marvin J. Furman, Project Manager
Groundwater Project

GWP:MJF

Attachment

cc w/attach:

D. R. Einan, EPA

A. B. Stone, Ecology

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Table. Results of PCE analyses from 300 Area wells sampled in 1998. Samples from some other wells in the north part of the 300 Area had estimated levels of PCE at or below 1 ug/L.

Date of Sample	399-1-10A	399-1-16A	399-1-17A	399-1-3	399-2-1	399-2-2	399-3-10
5-20-98	0.6 JH	1 JH	10. H				
5-22-98	0.6 J	1 JH	8.				
5-26-98	2 J	3 J	7.				
6-16-98	2 J	5 J	10.				
7-20-98	2 J	7.	38.				
8-13-98		16.					
8-17-98	3 J		10.				
8-18-98							3 J
8-19-98				16.			
8-25-98					7.	18.	
9-16-98	8.	17.	4 J				

J - Value is below the practical quantitation limit.

H - Holding time exceeded.

Practical quantitation limit is 5 ug/L.