

# David McCoy

To consider how carelessly the Department of Energy and the New Mexico Environment Department can neglect to treat and monitor nuclear waste in New Mexico consider the Sandia National Laboratories Mixed Waste Landfill (MWL):

The MWL hazardous and radioactive wastes are leaking toward Albuquerque's drinking water aquifer. There are chlorinated solvents and every type of radionuclide from atomic bomb testing, nuclear reactor fuel meltdown experiments, explosive liquid sodium and over 100 barrels of plutonium wastes all in flimsy or corroding containers.

The NMED, Environmental Protection Agency and DOE documents prove that groundwater monitoring wells were always known to be defective, but the false data was used to leave the deadly wastes in place.

Using the knowingly false monitoring data, the NMED allowed a dirt cover to be installed above the wastes. The dirt cover does not meet any federal standards to be protective.

NMED knew the dirt cover would not be protective from a 2005 document written by TecLaw, Inc, a contractor hired by NMED. NMED refused to provide that document until it was sued by Citizen Action New Mexico under the Public Records Act. NMED even filed a lawsuit against Citizen Action for asking for the document. The document was only released by Court order several years after the dirt cover was installed.

In a 2017 Final Order by an NMED Secretary, it is admitted that the dirt cover does not meet federal standards. The Order required a Five Year Review to consider either installing a qualified landfill at Sandia Labs or shipping the wastes offsite.

In the 2019 Five Year Review, Sandia Labs said it preferred offsite removal and said it could begin that process almost immediately if NMED would just provide the order to begin.

NMED refused to order Sandia Labs to remove the wastes. So the wastes continue to leak 24/7/365 to Albuquerque's drinking water aquifer. Both TCE and PCE have already arrived.

Two Uranium chip fires already occurred at the mixed waste dump. Fires/explosions from metallic sodium occurred at a sister dump at Beatty, Nevada releasing a radioactive plume over four states.

WIPP likewise had fire/explosions contaminating workers and releasing plutonium to the air.

The NMED ought to be demonstrating how it can achieve cleanup for radioactive wastes, not expanding the WIPP facility for bringing further radioactive wastes to New Mexico.