

# Los Alamos

NATIONAL LABORATORY

## memorandum

*Environment, Safety, and Health Division*

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Date: July 10, 1998

### SUBJECT: RADIOACTIVE LIQUID WASTE ZERO DISCHARGE PROJECT

We would like to thank the members of the Zero Discharge Working Group for their efforts and the presentation of their recommendations on April 8, 1998. The presentation outlined regulatory compliance issues, stakeholder concerns, and institutional program issues that persist with continued release of radioactive liquid effluent from the existing TA-50 Radioactive Liquid Waste (RLW) Treatment Plant. The Working Group proposed a series of solutions for the problems, as outlined in the attached report. We agree that the Laboratory should set a goal of zero discharge of radioactive liquid effluent to the environment. To reach this ambitious goal, ESH and EM Divisions will jointly initiate the Radioactive Liquid Waste Zero Discharge Project.

The Zero Discharge Working Group suggested a phased approach to achieve the goal. This approach starts with upgraded monitoring and waste minimization at the sources, continues with adding more advanced treatment and proceeds to complete reuse or evaporation of the effluent. We concur with the Working Group that reduction of tritium concentrations below the drinking water limit of 20,000 pCi/L in the TA-50 Plant effluent should be the first step towards full implementation.

The RLW Zero Discharge Project Leaders will be Neil Williams for ESH Division and Pete Worland for EM Division. They will develop a project plan for presentation within the next month. The project plan will provide the technical approach, cost estimates, funding recommendations and schedule for implementation of the RLW Zero Discharge Project. We also would like the Zero Discharge Working Group to assist facility managers, operating groups and others with implementation of their recommendations, including tritium reduction, waste minimization and improved monitoring. They will work closely with the operating groups and facility managers that generate the radioactive liquid waste to ensure that the project plan provides for the operational needs of the generators.

This project will require active participation by the RLW generating programs and the Laboratory as a whole. We request your support for the zero discharge goal and welcome your input.

DJE:TB:SR/rj

Attachments: a/s

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