



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY NEWS RELEASE

Department of Toxic Substances Control

T - 42 - 05

For Immediate Release
September 1, 2005

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CLEANUP PLAN FOR LAWRENCE BERKELEY NATIONAL LABORATORY APPROVED

Berkeley -The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) on August 31, 2005 approved the proposed soil and groundwater cleanup plan for the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL). In a Notice of Determination to LBNL the Department found that the soil and groundwater remediation measures outlined in the Corrective Measures Study, submitted to DTSC for review, were appropriate.

“With the approval of this plan, the important cleanup work that is necessary at the lab can now move forward,” said DTSC Acting Director, Leonard Robinson. “We are confident that the cleanup will be protective of public health and the environment.”

LBNL is a research facility managed by the University of California for the U.S. Department of Energy (U.S. DOE). It is a 200-acre site located in the Berkeley/Oakland hills northeast of the UC Berkeley campus. LBNL conducts a wide range of research activities, including high-energy physics, accelerator, materials, molecular biology and biomedical research. DTSC issued a Hazardous Waste Facility Permit to LBNL in May 1993. This permit required LBNL to investigate and cleanup all historical releases of hazardous chemicals at the site.

The cleanup plan focuses on eleven areas of groundwater contamination and two areas with soil contamination at LBNL. The primary contaminants of concern addressed under this plan are volatile organic compounds such as degreasing solvents.

The approved groundwater cleanup measures include:

- Excavating approximately 1,400 cubic yards contaminated soil and shipping it to an authorized landfill,
- Collecting contaminated groundwater and cleaning the water with activated carbon,
- Flushing contamination from the soil by re-injecting the cleaned-up groundwater,
- Injecting a food-grade additive to the groundwater to speed up the natural breakdown of volatile organic compounds,
- Adding hydrogen peroxide to degrade/destroy the contaminants in the soil, and
- Monitoring contaminant concentrations in the groundwater

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The next step requires that LBNL submit to DTSC detailed design plans for soil removal and groundwater remedies by fall 2005.

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the DTSC evaluated potential environmental impacts from implementing the cleanup plan. DTSC found no negative impacts and proposed a CEQA Negative Declaration. The U.S. DOE, which has jurisdiction over any radioactive contamination at LBNL, conducted a separate environmental analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act.

DTSC conducted extensive public outreach and held several public workshops and hearings during the course of investigations at LBNL. Most recently DTSC held a public comment period during which numerous comments were received. DTSC has prepared a Response to Comments document responding to these comments as part of this Notice of Decision. The Notice of Decision, Response to Comments document, Corrective Measures Study, and other related documents can be viewed on DTSC's website at the following address:

www.dtsc.ca.gov/HazardousWaste/index.html

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The Department of Toxic Substances Control's mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment and ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.