



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION IX

75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

NO0296.002947
MOFFETT FIELD
SSIC NO. 5090.3

November 25, 1996

Sandra Olliges
NASA-Ames Research Center
M/S 218-1 BUilding 218, Rm 205
Moffett Field, California 94035-1000

Re: MEW Superfund Site, Mountain View, California ("Site");
NASA Ames Research Center Facility

Dear Ms. Olliges:

This letter responds to your letter dated November 14, 1996 in which you indicate that NASA intends to delay signing the negotiated Settlement Agreement with the MEW companies to settle NASA-Ames Research Center's potential responsibility for sources at its facility which are releasing or threatening to release TCE into groundwater. In that letter, you advised that your delay is based upon information submitted by ERM-West regarding EPA's recent draft Cancer Risk Guidelines released in April 1996 (61FR17960). You further advised that ERM-West has calculated that the recent draft Guidelines may result in a conclusion that TCE may be safe in levels substantially higher than the current MCLs.

The guidelines ERM-West references are in draft form and many steps are necessary before any change in the maximum contaminant level ("MCL") would be considered or adopted. A change to the MCL would require a study and evaluation by the Office of Research and Development, and then must be proposed by the Office of Water which can be a very lengthy process. In addition, our toxicologists note that the draft guidance document and ERM-West's calculation address carcinogenic endpoints only. Any comprehensive calculation of a safe level, or any change in a MCL, would need to address the noncarcinogenic effects and endpoints in addition to the carcinogenic effects. EPA's evaluation of noncarcinogenic endpoints for TCE lead to a preliminary remediation goal of 37 parts per billion. These factors would be evaluated before any change in the MCL. EPA is also concerned about the breakdown products of TCE, and would factor this into any evaluation of a safe level, since vinyl chloride is far more toxic and is a known carcinogen.

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RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR
OFFICIAL GUIDANCE REGARDING REMEDIATION
OF MEW CHEMICALS

THE ABOVE IDENTIFIED PAGE IS NOT
AVAILABLE.

EXTENSIVE RESEARCH WAS PERFORMED BY
NAVFAC SOUTHWEST TO LOCATE THIS PAGE.
THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INSERTED AS A
PLACEHOLDER AND WILL BE REPLACED
SHOULD THE MISSING ITEM BE LOCATED.

QUESTIONS MAY BE DIRECTED TO:

DIANE C. SILVA
RECORDS MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST
NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND
SOUTHWEST
1220 PACIFIC HIGHWAY
SAN DIEGO, CA 92132

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