

**Environmental Restoration (ER) Project
Cerro Grande Fire
Accelerated Action Information Sheet**

**Potential Release Site (PRS) 18-003(c)
Septic System and Drain Field**

Technical Area (TA)-18 is located off Pajarito Road near the confluence of Pajarito Canyon and Threemile Canyon. The principal activities at TA-18 are the design, construction, research, development, and application of experiments that involve chain reactions of atoms splitting fast enough to be self-sustaining (called nuclear criticality).

PRS History: PRS 18-003(c) is an inactive septic system that served Building 18-32, Kiva II from 1952 to 1995. The system included a reinforced concrete septic tank, an inlet line, a discharge line, and an outfall located at the end of the drain field, which discharged into an ephemeral stream in Threemile Canyon. The cylindrical tank holds approximately 650 gallons. The drain field consists of four drain lines. Although water service to the restroom has been shut off and the doors are locked, the sewer lines from the facility have not been plugged. The contents of the tank were removed, and the interior was pressure washed during an interim cleanup action in 1996.

ER Project personnel sampled the tank contents; surface and subsurface soils adjacent to the tank; the drain field and outfall; and alluvial groundwater from temporary wells at PRS 18-003(c) in 1993 and 1994, as part of a field investigation. A permanent alluvial monitoring well was installed in the drain field. The contents of the tank and soils adjacent to the tank and from beneath the inlet and outlet lines were sampled again in 1997.

PRS 18-003(c) is listed on the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments module of the Laboratory's Hazardous Waste Facility permit. ER Project personnel have not proposed the site for no further



action, and there are indications of residual risk at the site because of the potential for hazardous materials in the environment.

Issues of Concern: The area upstream of PRS 18-003(c) burned during the Cerro Grande fire (a fire intensity rating of low to high). The drain field may be subject to erosion or scouring, and there may be surface or near-surface contamination associated with the drain field.

Accelerated Action Status: PRS 18-003(c) is part of a voluntary corrective measures plan designed to

- Collect supplemental surface and subsurface soil samples,
- Determine the nature and extent of soil contamination (if present) from the supplemental data,
- Assess the potential human health and ecological risks, and
- Clean up the site by excavation, if necessary.

Removing inactive septic tank systems that occupy canyon-bottom settings is an ER Project best management practice designed to mitigate potential environmental issues. The voluntary corrective measures plan indicates that the tank at PRS 18-003(c) will be removed.

Related Documents: November 2, 1995; VCM Plan, March 17, 1999; LANL 1995,52183; LANL 1997,55120.2

