

# NPL Site Narrative for Lee Acres Landfill (USDOJ)

## LEE ACRES LANDFILL (USDOJ) Farmington, New Mexico

**Conditions at proposal (June 24, 1988):** The Lee Acres Landfill, a Federal facility site, covers 40 acres of public land in San Juan County southeast of Farmington, New Mexico. The landfill area is about 2,200 feet north and upgradient of the Lee Acres residential subdivision. The Giant Industries, Inc., refinery property is to the southeast.

On May 1, 1962, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), part of the U.S. Department of Interior (USDOJ), leased 20 acres to San Juan County to operate a county landfill. In April 1981, the lease was renewed and another 20 acres were added to the county's lease.

The landfill consists of an undetermined number of solid waste trenches and unlined waste lagoons. At least three of the lagoons may have received a mixture of liquid wastes, including produced waters from oil and gas fields, waste oil, spent acids, chlorinated organic solvents, and septic tank wastes, according to the New Mexico Environmental Improvement Division (NMEID). In 1985, NMEID detected chlorinated volatile organic compounds, including 1,1-dichloroethane, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, and 1,2-dichloroethylene, as well as benzene, in a lagoon and in a residential well downgradient at the north end of the Lee Acres subdivision. An estimated 400 residents use shallow alluvial ground water within 3 miles of the site for drinking water.

Lee Acres Landfill is near where an arroyo meets the San Juan River, which is used for recreational activities. During a heavy rainstorm in April 1985, a dike of one of the lagoons broke. Wastes entered the arroyo, posing a possible threat to the San Juan River. During the same period, releases of toxic vapors from the lagoons caused approximately 15 people, including on-site cleanup workers, to experience difficulty in breathing, severe headaches, skin rashes, or other symptoms. Also during that time, the Governor called in the National Guard to secure the perimeter of the site. BLM ordered the county to fence the landfill, and NMEID hired a contractor to treat the lagoon contents with ferric chloride to prevent further releases of vapors. San Juan County subsequently filled in the four lagoons. BLM ordered the landfill closed and, when the county abandoned it, contracted for fencing.

In 1985, BLM hired a consultant to study conditions at and near the landfill. Subsequently, separate studies were conducted of soil gases, ground water hydrology, and ground water quality. EPA has reviewed the consultant's reports on the investigation. In November 1986, BLM arranged for alternative drinking water supplies for residents of Lee Acres using ground water. BLM plans to hire a contractor in 1988 to conduct a remedial investigation to determine the type and extent of contamination at the site.

**Status (August 30, 1990):** Later in the year, EPA, NMEID, and BLM plan to define the requirements of a remedial investigation/feasibility study.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see

the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.