
Meeting Date: June 18, 2014
Staff Contact: Rick Shean, Water Quality Hydrologist

TITLE: R-14-11 - Declaring the Water Authority's Position that Ethylene Dibromide at any Detectable Level will not be Allowed to Enter the Potable Drinking Water System

ACTION: Recommend Immediate Action

SUMMARY:

This Resolution would establish the policy of the Water Authority to not allow ethylene dibromide (EDB) at any detectable level to enter the potable drinking water system.

The Water Authority is compelled to respond with this policy proposal based on a June 6, 2014 letter from the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) to Kirtland Air Force Base (KAFB) disapproving the base's conceptual plan to allow contamination from their Bulk Fuels Facility (BFF) spill to continue to spread in the aquifer and reach one of KAFB's production wells (KAFB #3) as an interim measure to contain the plume.

Recent data from the investigation of the BFF Spill suggests that the plume continues to move northward, directly towards Ridgecrest well number 5, providing field evidence that the plume is moving in the direction of the production well fields to the north of the source area and away from KAFB #3.

The Air Force Civil Engineering Center and KAFB recently engaged the U.S. Geological Survey and the Water Authority to locate sentinel well locations that will be used as early warning wells and points where aquifer tests will be performed to better understand how groundwater flows to the Ridgecrest well field. Water Authority requests that the regular sampling and drilling of additional sentinel wells be conducted by the Air Force as long as it is needed to monitor the movement of the EDB plume.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

ALBUQUERQUE BERNALILLO COUNTY WATER UTILITY AUTHORITY

BILL NO. R-14-11

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26

RESOLUTION

DECLARING THE WATER AUTHORITY’S POSITION THAT ETHYLENE DIBROMIDE AT ANY DETECTABLE LEVEL WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE POTABLE DRINKING WATER SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, Kirtland Air Force Base (KAFB) notified the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) in November of 1999 that leakage from their now former bulk fuels facility (BFF) had been observed; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, KAFB observed jet fuel-related contaminants to the previously reported leakage, including ethylene dibromide (EDB); and

WHEREAS, EDB is highly toxic and a suspected carcinogen with a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency designated maximum contaminant level goal of zero, with the lowest analytical method detection limit for EDB at 10 parts per trillion; and

WHEREAS, the KAFB Bulk Fuels Facility Spill site has since contaminated the aquifer outside the base perimeter and below the City of Albuquerque with a dissolved-phase EDB plume that is not fully characterized, has not been contained, and continues to migrate towards the Water Authority’s Ridgecrest well field; and

WHEREAS, the United States Air Force (USAF)/KAFB has publically declared ownership of the fuel spill and has pledged to remediate the fuel spill before it contaminates any Water Authority production well; and

WHEREAS, the Water Authority supports the complete containment and remediation of the KAFB BFF Spill dissolved phase plume before it damages more of the aquifer and the city’s only drought reserve, and reaches any of the Water Authority’s production wells; and

WHEREAS, the Water Authority’s Water Resources Management Strategy is intended to provide a safe and sustainable water supply by preserving and protecting the aquifer; and

1 WHEREAS, preventing further degradation of the aquifer should be a top priority
2 for the USAF/KAFB and its contractor; and

3 WHEREAS, the New Mexico Environment Department sent a letter to KAFB on
4 June 6, 2014, disapproving the base's conceptual plan to allow the EDB contamination
5 to continue to migrate in the aquifer and reach one of KAFB's production wells as an
6 interim measure to contain the plume; and

7 WHEREAS, containment of the dissolved phase plume is a fundamental
8 requirement of the performance-based contract with USAF/KAFB's contractor and
9 proven technologies exist that can contain the dissolved phase contamination before it
10 reaches production wells.

11 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WATER AUTHORITY:

12 Section 1. The Water Authority requests that the USAF/KAFB and its
13 contractor to immediately develop and implement an appropriate remediation plan that
14 prevents further migration of the dissolved phase EDB plume.

15 Section 2. The Water Authority requests that the USAF/KAFB and its
16 contractor continue to monitor the location of the plume and install additional monitoring
17 wells to track the movement if it continues towards the Water Authority's water supply
18 wells.

19 Section 3. The Water Authority will not allow EDB contaminated water at any
20 level to enter the potable drinking water system.

21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32