



Production Company

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Questar E & P

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On March 2, 2007 Questar was performing routine well maintenance and cleaning on its fresh water tank. Pulled burner tubes and repaired, cleaned out the sediment bottom contained in small pit. The fresh water tank was put back into operation March 5, 2007. On that date, Questar excavated 30 cubic yards of the sludge and contaminated soil from the pit and hauled to Contract Environmental Services Landfarm. On that same day, Questar partially backfilled the pit but was unable to finish due to frozen ground conditions. On March 12, 2007 Questar's field operator found that someone had dug a hole 18"x 4' in the same place as the excavated pit. Questar's District Foreman inspected the hole and found that it did show some black residue. Questar immediately contacted C.E.S. to re-excavate the pit. This work was done on March 15, 2007. Five samples were taken by C.E.S. during the excavation and the results of analysis of the samples is attached. An additional 10 cubic yards of contaminated soil was hauled to C.E.S. The excavated pit will remain open and fenced until this matter is resolved.

Questar Exploration and Production Company

Comments to Notice of Written Order #SJ-07-GR02 dated March 12, 2007, and received by Questar on March 16, 2007.

Questar protests the issuance of this Notice of Written Order. BLM has mis-stated the facts surround this incident and is implying that Questar illegally dumped and buried contaminated waste. Nothing could be further from the truth.

On March 2, 2007, Questar was performing routing maintenance and cleaning on its fresh water tank. The field operator had pulled the burner tubes and cleaned out the sediment bottom. The sludge was contained in a small pit. The burner tubes were repaired and replaced and the fresh water tank was put back into operation on March 5, 2007. On that date, Questar excavated 30 cu. yards of the sludge and contaminated soil and hauled to Contract Environmental Services, Inc., (CES) in Farmington, NM. On that same day, Questar partially backfilled the pit but was unable to finish because of frozen ground conditions.

On March 8, 2007, Mr. Dan Rabinowitz of Durango BLM contacted our office to investigate a letter he had received from BLM employee Bob Salter wherein the current landowner for the Island Butte 7AH location had stated the "Questar snuck in on Sunday, March 4, 2007, mucked out the tank into a pit and backfilled the contaminated waste." As you can see from the attached invoice copies, Questar did no such thing. Apparently Bob Salter then wrote a letter citing Questar for "illegal dumping and burying of contaminated waste." It is astonishing that a BLM employee would jump to such a uncorroborated conclusion without even so much as a phone call to Questar to investigate the actual circumstances.

On March 12, 2007, Questar's field operator found that, unknown to Questar, someone had come onto its Island Butte 7AH location and had dug an 18" x 4' hole in the same place as the excavated pit. Questar's District Foreman inspected the hole and did show some black residue. Questar immediately contacted CES to re-excavate the pit. This work was done on March 15, 2007. Five soil samples were taken by CES during the excavation and the results of analyses of those samples is attached. An additional 10 cu. yards of contaminated soil was hauled to CES.

It is apparent that Questar has been responsible and honest in its clean-up of this location. Questar District Foreman has kept in continual contact with Mr. Dan Rabinowitz throughout this process. The excavated pit will remain open and fenced until this matter is resolved.

Karen Spray, Environmental Protection Specialist, made a field visit to your property to inspect Questar's 7-AH well. Ms. Spray inspected the excavation and reviewed the Hall Environmental soil testing documents. If Ms. Spray has not supplied a copy of her findings to you, I will be more than happy to fax her report to you.

Ms. Spray's findings were the same as the BLM's. The contaminated soil has been removed and properly disposed of. No further environmental actions need to be taken. The BLM has already issued an Incident of Non-Compliance (INC) in response to this incident back in early March.

Filling the excavation will allow the BLM to close out this action. The BLM has time constraints for mitigation of these enforcement actions.

I am giving Questar permission to refill the excavation.

At this point the hole poses a safety hazard to personnel and to wildlife. I am cc'ing this email to Questar as official authorization to refill the excavation. I am ordering Questar to wait until June 21st, (seven days from now) before taking any action on the 7-AH to give you adequate time to question this order. Questar, the BLM, and the COGCC have taken all possible steps to ensure that no permanent damage has been done to your property, not to mention the BLM issuing an INC.

In addition to all our actions, several months ago you gave me verbal permission to close the hole. I decided to hold off on acting on this until every avenue had been pursued to satisfy your concerns. I hope I and the BLM have met all your expectations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me concerning this decision. I am available to answer any questions you have.

Thank You,

Dan Rabinowitz
Petroleum Engineer
Durango Field Office
direct: 970-385-1363
fax: 970-375-2338
drabinow@blm.gov

Leonard Maez

From: daniel_rabinowitz@blm.gov
Sent: Wednesday, June 27, 2007 3:04 PM
To: Leonard Maez
Subject: Fw: Refilling of excavation at the 7-AH Well

Mr. Maez,

It has been over two weeks since I gave you general permission to refill the pit in question, and six days since the grace period ended. You have the BLM's permission to refill the pit at your convenience.

If you have any further questions, please email me.

Thanks!!

~ Dan

Dan Rabinowitz
Petroleum Engineer
Durango Field Office
direct: 970-385-1363
fax: 970-375-2338
drabinow@blm.gov

"Laissez les bon temps rouler!"

----- Forwarded by Daniel Rabinowitz/DUFO/CO/BLM/DOI on 06/27/2007 03:01 PM

Daniel
Rabinowitz/DUFO/C
O/BLM/DOI

06/13/2007 03:43
PM

To
"joseph paumen" <optical@fone.net>,
leonard.maez@questar.com,
karen.spray@state.co.us

CC

Gary
Retherford/DUFO/CO/BLM/DOI@BLM,
Richard
Rymerson/DUFO/CO/BLM/DOI@BLM

Subject
Refilling of excavation at the 7-AH
Well (Document link: Daniel
Rabinowitz)

Mr. Paumen,

Last week on June 5th, a representative of the Colorado Oil and Gas Commission (COGCC,