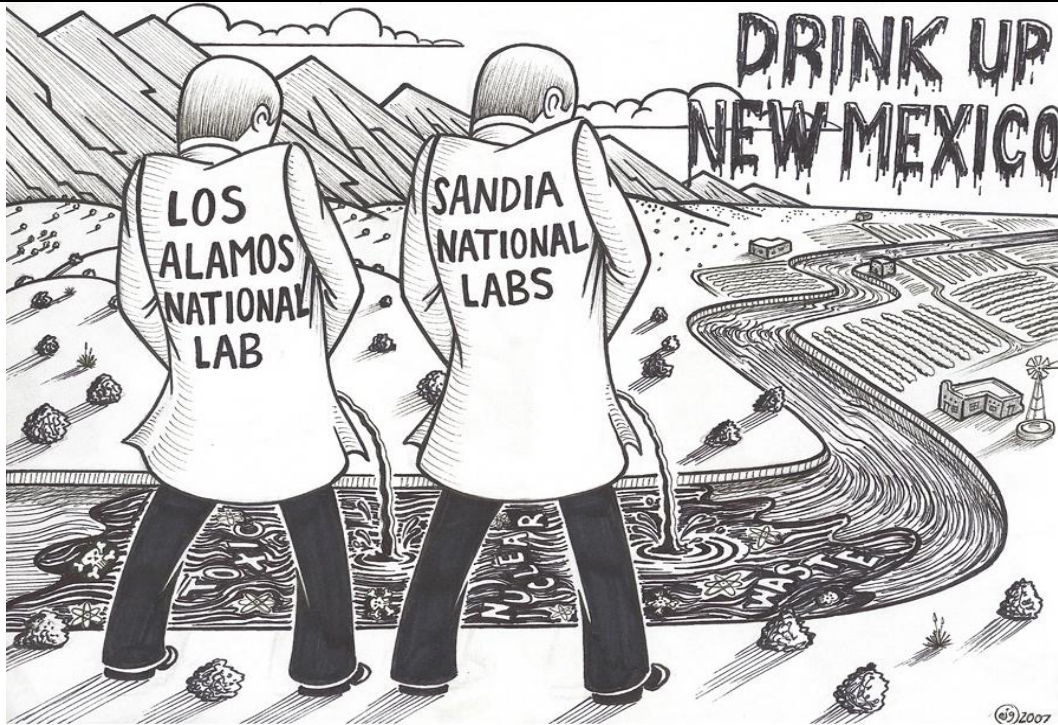


# NUCLEAR WASTE



Cartoon By Eric Garcia

- Radioactive wastes are named roughly by their source rather than by their amount of radioactivity; all “high level” wastes are wastes from nuclear reactors, other wastes called “mid level” or “transuranic wastes” (heavier than uranium) are from making nuclear bombs; “low level” wastes are usually diluted transuranic wastes or other wastes associated with medical procedures.
- Nuclear waste is composed of waste contaminated with radioactive nuclear isotopes; these unstable isotopes give off alpha and beta particles and gamma rays. All of these can be detrimental to the body causing cancer, nerve disorders and birth defects.
- The National Academy of Sciences’ recent research has shown that there is no safe level of exposure to radioactive isotopes.
- In New Mexico, nuclear waste is stored at Los Alamos National Laboratory, Sandia National Laboratory and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The wastes at Los Alamos have leaked into the underlying aquifer and the Rio Grande. New monitoring wells at Sandia will soon reveal the extent of contamination there. WIPP, which was opened in 1999 as a permanent repository for transuranic waste, is a controversial choice for long term storage since it lies in one of the world’s largest karst fields where water runs below ground, instead of above ground, through fractures and caverns, and has oil and natural gas surrounding the site.
- High Level Waste from nuclear power plants is the most toxic kind of nuclear waste, and is slated to go to Nevada for permanent storage. It’s currently all stored on-site at the nuclear reactors until the Yucca Mountain Project opens up in Nevada.



## What You Can Do



If you are concerned about ***radionuclides in the Rio Grande***, about to be used as drinking water by Albuquerque and Santa Fe, consider joining the contact list of Agua es Vida Action Team, [lesleyweinstock@yahoo.com](mailto:lesleyweinstock@yahoo.com), 505 242-5511, 266-2663

If you are concerned about the ***effects of Sandia National Laboratories on our air and water***, here's some groups you might contact and ask how you can help:

Citizen Action; [dave@radfreemn.org](mailto:dave@radfreemn.org), 505 262 1862 (ask for Dave)

Protect our Air and Water (PAW); [contactus@cardnm.org](mailto:contactus@cardnm.org), 505 266 2663

If you would like to work at ***helping the people along the WIPP route protect themselves*** from the impacts of WIPP trucks, contact CARD, [contactus@cardnm.org](mailto:contactus@cardnm.org), 505 266 2663.

If you want ***more information on WIPP***, contact the Southwest Research and Information Center (SRIC)--their info is below

For other information and ways to get involved in resisting Los Alamos, contact these groups:

Amigos Bravos; [bshields@amigosbravos.com](mailto:bshields@amigosbravos.com),

Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety; 505 989 7342

Embudo Valley Monitoring Group; [serit@cybermesa.com](mailto:serit@cybermesa.com)

Honor our Pueblo Existence; [mariann2@windstream.net](mailto:mariann2@windstream.net)

Los Alamos Peace Project; [networks@networkearth.org](mailto:networks@networkearth.org)

Nuke Watch New Mexico; [jcoghlan@nukewatch.org](mailto:jcoghlan@nukewatch.org)

PaxChristiNewMexico.org; 505 264 2838;

Sisters of Loretto; [pmsl@cybermesa.com](mailto:pmsl@cybermesa.com)

SRIC; [sricdon@earthlink.net](mailto:sricdon@earthlink.net)

Tewa Women United; 505 747 3259;

Trinity Nuclear Abolitionists; 505 242 0497