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Media Advisory

The State of Nevada, Department of Public Safety's State Fire Marshal Division announces the findings from the investigation of the Industrial Fire Incident near Beatty

CARSON CITY, NV –The State of Nevada, Department of Public Safety's (DPS) State Fire Marshal Division (SFM) has announced the findings from the investigation of the State of Nevada low-level radioactive waste disposal site located on US Highway 95 approximately 12 miles from Beatty in Nye County.

The investigation was led by the State Fire Marshal Division with assistance from the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection and the Department of Health and Human Services - Radiation Control Program.

State Fire Marshal Chief Peter Mulvihill presented the findings from the incident to state officials earlier today. The DPS has formally released a fire investigation report detailing the results from industrial fire that ignited on Sunday, October 18, 2015.

The 80-acre industrial site in Nye County consists of a 40 acre low-level radiological waste storage site and a 40-acre active chemical processing facility. The site sits about 115 miles northwest of Las Vegas, is on state land and is under state regulatory oversight.

The State of Nevada acquired this site in 1961 to receive low-level radioactive waste materials. These materials were buried for disposal at this site from 1962 until the site was closed in 1992. Materials were buried in numbered trenches and covered by an earth fill. This incident occurred at the east end of Trench 14 near the east perimeter of the closed waste disposal site.

"DPS's priority remains ensuring the safety of Nye County residents," said James Wright, DPS's Director. "Investigators took the necessary time to ensure all aspects of the industrial fire were reviewed. The complete report is available to the public in an effort to remain transparent."

"As detailed in our report, this investigation found corrosion of the steel drums containing the metallic sodium over time allowed the packing fluid to seep out leaving the metallic sodium exposed to the underground elements," said Nevada State Fire Marshal Peter Mulvihill. "Heavier than normal rainfall seeped into the ground reaching the metallic sodium through a compromised cover causing the fire."

The incident resulted in no injuries to personnel, the effects of the fire were contained to the immediate site, and there was no release of radioactive materials.

For the complete report please go to www.dps.nv.gov

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