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Subject: Blue Alert: Outdoor Sign, Label, and Tag Inspections

**Title: Does Your Site Have an Inspection Program for Outdoor Signs, Labels, and Tags?**

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**LESSONS LEARNED:** Outdoor signs, labels, and tags must be inspected regularly to identify damaged or weathered signs, labels, and tags that need to be replaced. Providing personnel with new signs and equipment to replace signs during inspections helps ensure that weathered or damaged signs, labels, and tags are promptly replaced. Personnel should also be instructed to attach signs, labels, and tags using all provided attachment points to prevent excessive wear or abrasion damage.

**DISCUSSION:** During a management walkaround at the Laboratory's solid waste disposal site, numerous faded, damaged, and missing signs and postings were identified along the site fenceline. Signs that faced south were noticeable more weathered than signs facing north. The signs include "Danger" signs for RCRA permitted areas, "Radiological Control Area" signs for areas having radioactive waste, and "No Trespassing" signs.

The plastic signs had been installed on the fence with thin carbon steel wire. Only the top attachment holes had been used, allowing the signs to rotate in the wind, which eventually caused the wire to wear through the signs. Other signs had failed because the thin carbon steel wire broke. The entire perimeter fence at the site was subsequently inspected, and many more faded and damaged signs were identified.

To ensure that signs are properly attached (i.e. anchor signs at all four attachment holes to prevent movement induced fatigue of the sign and/or the wire) and that appropriate gauge wire is used to attach signs, the walkaround findings were recorded in the Solid Waste Operations issue tracking system and site personnel implemented a sign replacement program in conjunction with their annual inspection process.

The site purchased metal replacement signs because they are more durable than plastic signs, and because rust is not a significant problem in New Mexico's arid environment. A roll of 14-gauge wire was also purchased and placed in a storage cabinet at the site with extra signs. Personnel responsible for performing sign inspections now take new signs and wire out into the field so that signs that appear to be fading or showing stress cracks, etc., can be replaced immediately.

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DOE FUNCTIONAL CATEGORY:

KEYWORDS: signs, posting, fence, inspections

REFERENCES: Management Walkaround System Report 09451, Laboratory Implementation Requirements LIR402-100-01.0, "Signs, Labels, and Tags."

**FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:** Information in this report is accurate to the best of our knowledge. As a means of measuring the effectiveness of this report, please contact the originator of significant action(s) taken as a result of this report or of any technical inaccuracies you find. Your feedback is appreciated.