

# Upper Los Alamos Canyon

## Former Technical Area 32

### Canyon-side Cleanup



★ Legacy outfall cleanup site

## Former Technical Area 32

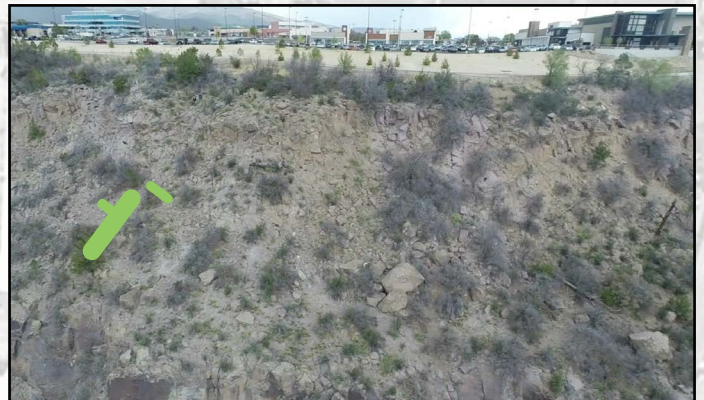
Former Technical Area 32 (TA-32) includes the site currently occupied by Smith's Marketplace and extends southward on to U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration property along the south-facing slopes of Los Alamos Canyon.

Between 1944 and 1953, the portion of former TA-32 now occupied by the marketplace was the site of a small research laboratory and medical research annex used for Manhattan Project— and early Cold War—era operations. These legacy facilities included septic tanks and drainlines that discharged liquid waste from an outfall into the canyon resulting in a small area of mercury-contaminated soil on restricted DOE property.

Since the 1950s, the Laboratory has removed the facilities and infrastructure, performed numerous investigations, and implemented cleanups to address the legacy site. Before Smith's Marketplace was constructed in 2013, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Hazardous Waste Bureau determined that all investigations and recommended cleanups for the portion of the site occupied by the marketplace were complete, leaving only the small area of contaminated soil being addressed by this project.

The Laboratory addresses sites by assessing risk to human health and the environment in compliance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements. The concentration of mercury at this site exceeds EPA standards for human health and environmental risk based on land use and environmental conditions of the site.

Former TA-32 is one of the few remaining legacy sites along the slopes of Los Alamos Canyon. Since 2008, the Laboratory has completed investigations and necessary cleanups in compliance with NMED regulations at 106 of the 119 sites originally identified in and around Los Alamos Canyon. Once cleanup activities at former TA-32 are completed, only 12 sites will remain—all on restricted DOE property.



The site of the legacy outfall (shown above in green), known as Solid Waste Management Unit 32-002(b2), includes a small area of soil contaminated with mercury at concentrations that require corrective action.



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## High-angle canyon-side cleanup

Through cooperative efforts with the property owner and Los Alamos County, DOE, the Laboratory, and contracted experts are removing the contaminated soil and restoring the site.

Using a telescoping crane, crews hoist a specialized spider excavator onto the slopes of the canyon to remove the contaminated soil. Field crews containerize the removed soil into waste bags that are lifted from the slope using the crane, loaded onto flatbeds, and driven to a waste storage area on DOE property. From there, the waste will be shipped to a licensed disposal facility.

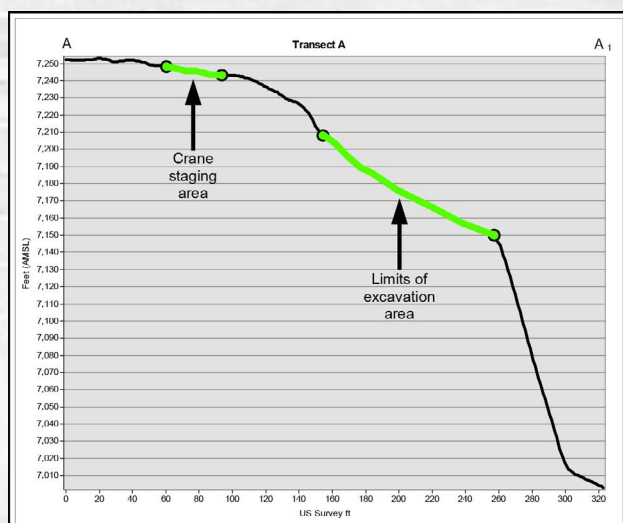
Before leaving the site, experts will evaluate results of confirmatory samples to ensure that the cleanup is complete. Once the cleanup is completed, crews will restore the site.



Crews are using a spider excavator, similar to the one used for a cleanup at the Los Alamos County airport (above) in 2013, to excavate soil from the steep slopes of the canyon side.



Experts analyze results of confirmation samples from around cleanup sites to ensure that all contamination is removed in compliance with NMED regulations.



Crews are removing soil from a less than 45-degree-angle slope, as shown in the cross-section above.

## About Los Alamos National Laboratory

([www.lanl.gov](http://www.lanl.gov))

Los Alamos National Laboratory, a multidisciplinary research institution engaged in strategic science on behalf of national security, is operated by Los Alamos National Security, LLC, a team composed of Bechtel National, the University of California, the Babcock & Wilcox Company, and URS Corporation for the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration.

Los Alamos enhances national security by ensuring the safety and reliability of the U.S. nuclear stockpile; developing technologies to reduce threats from weapons of mass destruction; and solving problems related to energy, environment, infrastructure, health, and global security concerns.

For more information, contact [envoutreach@lanl.gov](mailto:envoutreach@lanl.gov)

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