

OTHER ACTIVITIES RELATED TO CERRO GRANDE FIRE

The New Mexico Environment Department has contracted with Risk Assessment Corporation to do an independent assessment of public exposure and risks from radionuclides and chemicals released by the Cerro Grande Fire. During the assessment, the Department will hold public meetings to solicit information and share results.

The Department is participating in the work of the Inter-Agency Flood Risk Assessment Team, or IFRAT, a consortium of organizations established to integrate communications and deliver information to the general public and interested organizations on flood and contamination risks related to the aftermath of the Cerro Grande fire.

For more fire related data and information, visit the Environment Department web site,
<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/>.

NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY OVERSIGHT BUREAU

The mission of the New Mexico Environment Department DOE Oversight Bureau is to assure that activities at DOE facilities are protective of the public health and safety and the environment.

One of our objectives is the development and implementation of a program of independent monitoring and oversight. Environmental monitoring and oversight concerns include on-site discharges and emissions, water quality, air quality, and off-site radioactivity surveillance.



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NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

DOE OVERSIGHT BUREAU

CERRO GRANDE FIRE
IMPACTS TO NNM FARM
SOILS



EVALUATION OF CERRO GRANDE FIRE IMPACTS

The NMED DOE Oversight Bureau evaluated potential impacts to northern New Mexico farm soils from the Cerro Grande Fire. Our bureau collected soil samples from 20 farms, had them analyzed for radionuclides, nutrients, metals, and organics, and compared the results to Jemez Mountain reference conditions and Cerro Grande forest floor ash.

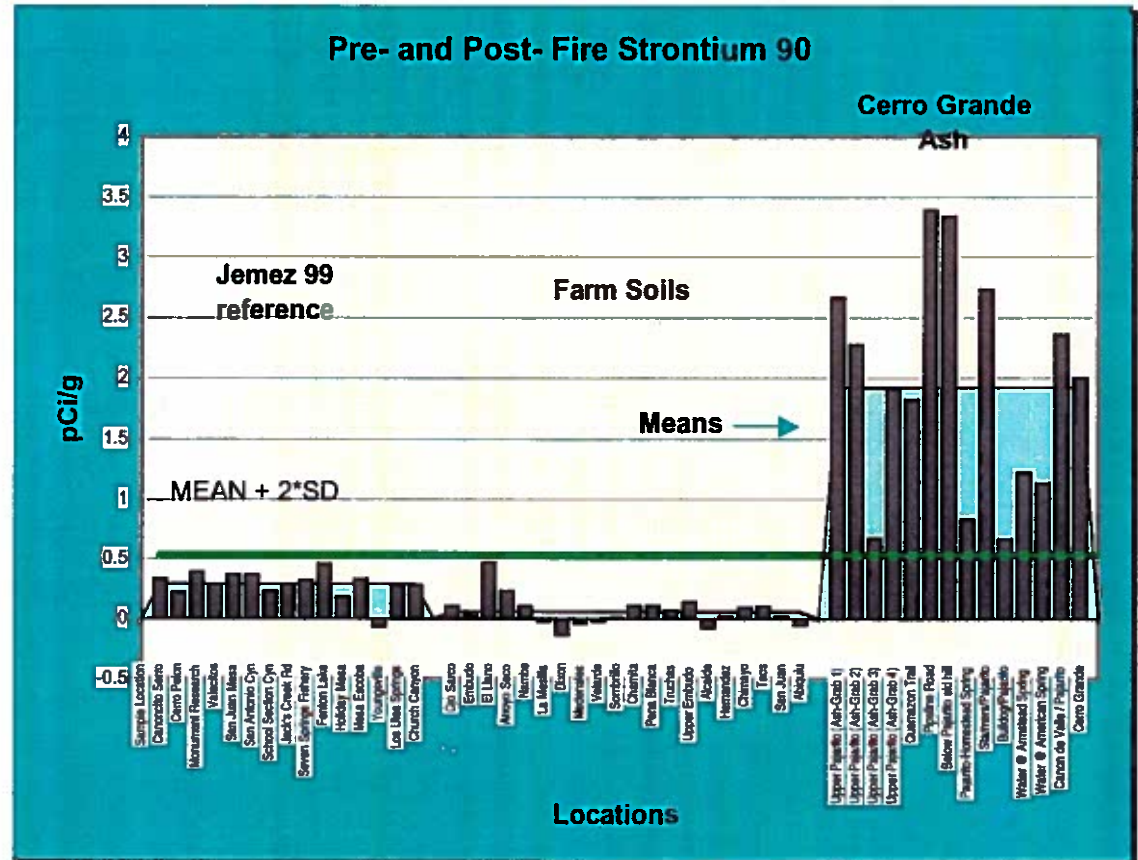
We found that soils potentially impacted by smoke from the Cerro Grande fire in northern New Mexico are not different than background reference conditions, although forest floor ash measurements from the Cerro Grande area demonstrate increased concentrations of radionuclides, most trace metals, and nutrients.

A few individual metal, radiological, and organic measurements in farm soils appear greater than reference conditions and may be the result of individual, agricultural, industrial practices, or natural variability. Locations with exceptional values could be re-sampled.

The Pre- and Post-Fire Strontium 90 Chart depicted here demonstrates the comparison of strontium 90 measurements in Jemez Mountain and northern New Mexico Farm soils, and Cerro Grande ash samples. The light blue background boxes (means) indicate a typical measurement for the sample

population. The green line (mean + 2 standard deviations) represents a reference value that includes the 'background' average measurement and a measure of the variability that comes from the environment, sampling, and chemical analysis.

Additional charts were created from our data tables to demonstrate the analytical and statistical relationships of the 5 radionuclides and 23 metals in the various sample matrices sampled by our bureau before and after the Cerro Grande Fire.



Contact David Englert at (505) 827-1536 about this flyer and DOE OB data presented at the "2001 Northern New Mexico Organic Farming and Gardening Expo".