

**MINUTES
of the
FIFTH MEETING
of the
RADIOACTIVE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS COMMITTEE**

**December 8, 2025
State Capitol, Room 309
Santa Fe**

The fifth meeting of the Radioactive and Hazardous Materials Committee was called to order by Senator Jeff Steinborn, chair, on December 8, 2025 at 9:45 a.m. in Room 309 of the State Capitol in Santa Fe.

Present

Sen. Jeff Steinborn, Chair
Rep. Joanne J. Ferrary, Vice Chair
Rep. John Block*
Sen. David M. Gallegos
Rep. Stefani Lord
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto*
Sen. Harold Pope

Absent

Rep. Cathrynn N. Brown
Sen. Angel M. Charley
Rep. Meredith A. Dixon
Rep. Yanira Gurrola
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson
Sen. Antoinette Sedillo Lopez
Sen. James G. Townsend

Advisory Members

Sen. Crystal Brantley
Rep. Debra M. Sariñana
Sen. Anthony L. Thornton

Guest Legislators

Rep. Michelle Paulene Abeyta
Rep. Joseph Franklin Hernandez

*Appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives or the president pro tempore of the senate as a voting member for this meeting only.

Staff

Paul Estok, Staff Attorney, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Sara Wiedmaier, Researcher, LCS
Em Green, Staff Attorney, LCS

Minutes Approval

Because the committee will not meet again this year, the minutes for this meeting have not been officially approved by the committee.

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Monday, December 8

Welcome and Introductions (9:45 a.m.)

Senator Steinborn welcomed everyone and invited members of the committee, staff and audience to introduce themselves.

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Issues in Santa Fe County (9:50 a.m.)

Jonas Armstrong, director, Water Protection Division, Department of Environment (NMED), and Andrew Hautzinger, special projects coordinator, Water Protection Division, NMED, discussed high PFAS contamination levels in Santa Fe County, especially in La Cieneguilla, possible sources of the contamination and health impacts of PFAS exposure. Mr. Armstrong shared the NMED's response, community outreach and solutions, including providing water filters to residents and site soil and water sampling to monitor PFAS levels and movement. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=RHMC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=1>.

Approval of Minutes (10:29 a.m.)

Upon a motion made and seconded, the minutes for the meeting of October 15, 2025 were approved without objection.

Abandoned Uranium Mine Cleanup (10:30 a.m.)

Miori Harms, uranium mine reclamation coordinator, NMED, and Abimbola Ojekanmi, uranium mine reclamation coordinator, Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD), provided an overview of the Uranium Mine Cleanup Program and a progress report on current and planned cleanup efforts at neglected contaminated sites around the state. Ms. Harms discussed the need for dedicated, recurring funding to complete and expand cleanup activities and changes in federal agencies and programs that could impact progress. David "DJ" Ennis, manager, Mining Act Reclamation Program, EMNRD, joined for the question-and-answer portion to address questions regarding mineral rights and mine permitting near cultural sites and tribal consultation. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=RHMC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=2>.

Class VI Carbon Dioxide Sequestration (11:50 a.m.)

Benjamin Shelton, deputy secretary, EMNRD, provided a follow-up presentation on Class VI well permitting and the state's primacy application to address committee questions from the September meeting. Mr. Shelton outlined the differences between Class II and Class VI wells, Class VI carbon sequestration permitting and bonding requirements, operational and closure cost projections and potential liability concerns for the state. He noted that there are no Class VI wells in operation in New Mexico but that there is a permit application currently under review by the United States Environmental Protection Agency for a carbon storage hub in San Juan County. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=RHMC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=3>.

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Task Force Update (12:43 p.m.)

Carrie DeAgüero, chief, Hazardous Waste Planning Bureau, EMNRD, provided updates on the Radioactive Waste Consultation Task Force and the WIPP Transportation Safety Program. Ms. DeAgüero shared metrics for state agency hazard response training programs and transuranic shipments to the WIPP and noted plans for coordinated emergency training exercises and state-federal coordination in 2026. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=RHMC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=4>.

Homeland Security and Emergency Management Department (DHSEM) (12:56 p.m.)

Tessa Snyder, hazardous materials coordinator, DHSEM, and Ali Rye, secretary, DHSEM, discussed the background of the DHSEM, statewide hazardous materials incidents and responses and local preparedness efforts. Ms. Snyder shared the State Emergency Response Commission's 2024 annual report and highlighted the work of the local emergency planning committees, which develop hazardous chemical emergency response plans, trainings and regional coordination activities. She noted collaboration with state and federal entities, emerging threats such as lithium-ion batteries and program funding and fee cap issues. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=RHMC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=5>.

Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Update (1:26 p.m.)

Frances Chadwick, staff director, LANL, and Kathy Keith, director, Community Partnerships Office, LANL, provided an update on LANL activities over the past year, including administrative changes, progress across mission areas and impacts in New Mexico. Ms. Chadwick noted that of \$1.8 billion in procurements for the year, \$752 million was spent with New Mexico businesses. Ms. Keith added that LANL supports workforce pipeline programs at

New Mexico colleges and universities and invested \$18 million to support plutonium workforce development specifically. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=RHMC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=6>.

Los Alamos Legacy Cleanup and Hexavalent Chromium Plume Update (2:12 p.m.)

Jessica Kunkle, manager, Environmental Management-Los Alamos (EM-LA) Field Office, United States Department of Energy, discussed the mission of the EM-LA Office in the cleanup of legacy contamination and waste at LANL. Ms. Kunkle outlined the number of waste shipments to the WIPP since 1999, the process of retrieving buried waste, the current above-ground waste inventory and plans for disposal. She emphasized coordination with the NMED, compliance with the consent order and ongoing efforts to monitor and treat the hexavalent chromium plume. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=RHMC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=7>.

Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) Report (3:14 p.m.)

Jonathan Plaue, technical director, DNFSB, provided the background, scope and authority of the DNFSB, which was established by Congress to advise the United States Secretary of Energy and ensure the health and safety of the public and workers at defense nuclear facilities. Mr. Plaue highlighted United States Department of Energy sites with defense nuclear facilities, including the three sites in New Mexico, which are Sandia National Laboratories, LANL and the WIPP, and discussed specific activities and current safety issues related to each of these sites. He noted that DNFSB inspectors are considered excepted staff and will continue to oversee site operations and safety, regardless of a government shutdown. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=RHMC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=8>.

Discussion of Proposed Legislation

There was no proposed legislation for discussion.

Public Comment (4:06 p.m.)

A list of individuals making public comment is available in the meeting file.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 4:18 p.m.