

## **New EPA Reports Available Online**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently announced the availability of several new reports online.

### **New FRTR Cost/Performance**

**Information.** The Federal Remediation Technologies Roundtable (FRTR) Web site has 30 new reports, including 14 reports addressing cleanup of volatile organic compounds in groundwater using thermal treatment, chemical oxidation, and air sparging, and 16 reports focusing on in-situ or ex-situ soil treatment. A total of 342 total case study reports on remedial technologies are now available. Also new at FRTR are 11 new site characterization and monitoring case studies covering innovative technologies for organic chemical and explosive characterization, strategies for field-based site characterization, geophysical techniques, and leak detection for bulk fuel tanks and fuel pipelines, for a total of 121 reports on site characterization and monitoring technologies available. Finally, 52 multi-site technology assessment reports are compiled for the first time. These contain information on the design, implementation, and selection of specific technologies. For access to these reports and other FRTR information, visit [www.frtr.gov](http://www.frtr.gov).

**Technology Overview Using Case Studies of Alternative Landfill Technologies and Associated Regulatory Topics** (ALT-1, March 2003, 107 pages). This document, produced by the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council (ITRC), showcases flexibility in the regulatory framework for alternatives that may rely on native vegetation instead of artificial liners to keep water from reaching buried waste. The report presents examples of flexibility used in regulatory frameworks for approving alternative landfill cover designs, current research information about the use of alternative covers, and examples of approved designs and constructed covers. Visit [www.itrcweb.org/ALT-1.pdf](http://www.itrcweb.org/ALT-1.pdf).

**Using Dynamic Field Activities for On-Site Decision Making: A Guide for Project Managers** (EPA/540/R-03/002, May 2003, 205 pages). This document was developed by EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response to provide environmental cleanup professionals with guidance on how to use an on-site decision-making process to streamline fieldwork at contaminated sites. The process is not new; rather, this document outlines techniques that have been successfully used at a variety of contaminated sites, such as Superfund sites, RCRA facilities, leaking underground storage tanks, and brownfields, so that other project managers can take advantage of existing knowledge. View or download the document at [www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/dfa/guidoc.htm](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/programs/dfa/guidoc.htm).

## **Rio Grande Water Deal Reached by U.S. and Mexico**

*Article originally appeared in Water Tech Online, July 7, 2003*

Mexico has guaranteed that a third of the water conserved by water projects in the state of Chihuahua will be sent to American farmers in an agreement signed July 3, 2003, *KVIA-TV* in El Paso reported. Sally Spener, a spokeswoman for the International Boundary and Water Commission, said that this new agreement follows through on a June 2002 pact in which Mexico agreed to transfer 90,000 acre-feet of water from Falcon Lake to the United States. She also told the news station that the new agreement allows for U.S. inspections of the projects.

Both pacts are amendments to the 1944 water treaty stipulating that the United States and Mexico share water from the Rio Grande and Colorado River. Mexico has not been meeting its commitment to send the United States 350,000 acre-feet annually and now owes the United States 1.4 million acre-feet, according to the report.

South Texas farmers were outraged to hear that the June 2002 agreement also called for millions of dollars to be sent to Mexico to improve irrigation systems. The \$40 million in funds were to come from the North American Development Bank, a bi-national fund, the story said.

Mexico is expected to be able to send the United States 107,014 acre-feet of saved water annually when the projects are completed in about three years, Spener said. This is about a third of the 321,043 acre-feet engineers expect their project to conserve.

Visit [www.watertechonline.com](http://www.watertechonline.com).

## **California Dam Decision Signals Major Water Policy Shift**

*Article originally appeared in Water Tech Online, July 7, 2003*

A top California water official has said that his department is no longer scouting new dam sites, marking a major shift in California state water policy, the *Stockton Record* reported. A plan being drafted to meet California's water needs until 2030 will not include consideration of new government-built dams and reservoirs, Jonas Minton, deputy director of the California Department of Water Resources, said in the article.

The halt to scouting dam sites is the most forceful acknowledgment to date that the era of major dam building is over. The only water storage sites that will be part of the California water plan are relatively small storage projects already being studied by the CalFed Bay-Delta Program.

Instead of drawing from new mountain reservoirs, the state hopes to get extra water primarily by promoting conservation, desalination of ocean water, water recycling, and storing any extra water in aquifers, the paper reported. That means that by 2030, California will have 50 percent more people but only 10 percent more usable water.

Visit [www.watertechonline.com](http://www.watertechonline.com).

## California Tightens Its Water Quality Standards

In May 2003, the California Department of Health Services (DHS) approved a tightening of drinking water standards for several compounds, effective June 12. DHS reduced the maximum contaminant levels established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to more stringent state standards for the following compounds:

- Atrazine: reduced from 0.003 milligrams per liter (mg/L) to 0.001 mg/L (the detection limit for purposes of reporting was also reduced from 0.001 mg/L to 0.0005 mg/L)
- Cyanide: reduced from 0.2 mg/L to 0.15 mg/L
- Ethylbenzene: reduced from 0.7 mg/L to 0.3 mg/L
- Methoxychlor: reduced from 0.04 mg/L to 0.03 mg/L
- Oxamyl: reduced from 0.2 mg/L to 0.05 mg/L
- 1,2,4-Trichlorobenzene: reduced from 0.07 mg/L to 0.005 mg/L

Visit [www.dhs.cahwnet.gov/ps/ddwem/publications/Regulations/MCLrevisions6-12-03.pdf](http://www.dhs.cahwnet.gov/ps/ddwem/publications/Regulations/MCLrevisions6-12-03.pdf).

## 30 Billion Gallon Storage Project Planned for Southern California

Helping to ensure the reliability of urban Southern California's water supplies during dry years and emergencies, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) recently partnered with three Inland Valley water agencies on a project that will stockpile more than 30 billion gallons of water underground. Metropolitan's President and Chief Executive Officer Ronald R. Gastelum joined officials from Inland Empire Utilities Agency, the Three Valleys Municipal Water District, and the Chino Basin Watermaster in signing a 25-year agreement to store water in the Chino Basin, a vast aquifer underlying an area stretching from Pomona to Chino.

The \$27.5 million project will allow Metropolitan, in cooperation with the

three local agencies, to store up to 100,000 acre-feet of water in the Chino Basin during wet periods and withdraw 33,000 acre-feet per year during dry spells, droughts, or emergencies. The project calls for drilling seven extraction wells and constructing ion exchange treatment facilities throughout the area to remove nitrates from the pumped groundwater. Construction of the new facilities is expected to begin later this year.

Visit [www.mwd.dst.ca.us/](http://www.mwd.dst.ca.us/).

## Nevada Requests More Water

On July 10, 2003, the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* reported that representatives of the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) and the Colorado River Commission of Nevada recently met with U.S. Assistant Interior Secretary Bennett Raley to request a 20 percent increase in Nevada's water allotment. The water would come from the Colorado River over a 15-year period, the paper reported.

Nevada's allotment of Colorado River water is 300,000 acre-feet per year, according to the *Review-Journal*, and is the smallest allocation of any of the states using the water. Nevada exceeded its use of that amount by about 8 percent last year, said the newspaper. An additional 20 percent would bring their allotment up to 360,000 acre-feet per year.

The newspaper cited fears that residents would leave the state as the reason additional water is needed. According to the paper, Pat Mulroy, general manager of the SNWA, stated that if Nevada does not get additional water, "It would be really bleak. It would mean living in a severe drought. If the drought were to last [15 years] people would get tired of living in these conditions. People will leave."

According to the *Review-Journal*, the request for additional water was made at this time because U.S. Interior Secretary Gale Norton ordered states earlier this year to take only their official allotments from the river. This request was made in light of the failure of California water officials to work out an agreement on dividing their share of the water between urban and agricultural interests.

Nevada officials are optimistic about receiving the additional water allocation because their request is relatively small compared to the quantities used by the other states, said the newspaper.

Visit [www.reviewjournal.com](http://www.reviewjournal.com)

## Rio Puerco, NM Watershed Receives Funding

On May 2, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced nearly \$15 million in grants to 20 watershed organizations selected as part of a new Watershed Initiative. The Rio Puerco Watershed in northwest New Mexico was the only one selected from the Southwest.

Last year, President Bush asked the nation's governors and tribal leaders to nominate proposals to support community-based approaches to clean up the nation's watersheds. This year, Congress appropriated \$15 million of the President's original \$20 million funding request. The winning watershed organizations were chosen because they best demonstrated the ability to achieve on-the-ground environmental results in a short time frame, exhibited strong partnerships with a wide variety of support, showed innovation, and demonstrated compatibility with existing governmental programs. The grants are one-time awards. EPA expects to announce a call for nominations for another round of grants in late summer.

The lead organization for the Rio Puerco Watershed is the Rio Puerco Management Committee (RPMC), a congressionally mandated collaborative committee chartered in 1997 to tackle the many environmental problems of this watershed. Funding from the EPA's Watershed Initiative will be used for restoring uplands and in-channel streams, altering channel flow and topography, implementing livestock grazing management practices, and developing programs to educate the public. The award provides \$700,000 to RPMC.

Visit [www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative](http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative) for more information.