

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 10, 2012

TO: T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: W. Linzau and R. Quirk, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending February 10, 2012

Board staff member L. Zull was on-site to observe portions of the readiness assessment in the Canister Storage Building.

Waste Treatment Plant (WTP): The site rep observed a workshop in which the preliminary test results from spray leak testing (see Activity Report 1/20/12) were presented to the Office of River Protection (ORP) and the WTP contractor. The focus of the workshop was to gather opinions on whether the data collected provided technical justification to validate the conclusions. The attendees discussed conducting additional evaluations of the data and potentially repeating test runs to help explain anomalies.

The site rep conducted a walkdown of the facility where mixing testing is being conducted to observe the progress of construction of the eight-foot-diameter test vessel. The transparent acrylic vessel is installed and fabrication of the vessel internal components is proceeding. The project has accelerated construction to recover from delays and to begin testing in mid-March.

Tank Farms: ORP and the contractor agreed that the recent failure to complete monitoring of temperatures of equipment in C-Farm was a TSR violation (see Activity Report 2/3/12). This week, the site rep reviewed the more recently completed data sheets and observed that operators had an increased focus on completing the required temperature monitoring in a timely fashion.

Solid Waste Operation Complex: Contaminated water was discovered dripping from a large concrete box in the outside storage area in the Central Waste Complex. The spill was discovered during routine radiological surveys when the technician observed a small brown stain under the edge of the box. The contractor believes that rain or snow migrated into the box and dripped out as temperatures rose above freezing. Several issues were noted during the immediate response to the spill, including poor communications and difficulty performing recovery actions.

618-10 Burial Ground: The site rep observed proof-of-concept testing of the process the contractor is using to stabilize hundreds of small bottles found during trench remediation. The process being tested uses grout to cover the bottles to control contamination while an excavator is used to break the bottles open. One of the test runs failed because a 20-milliliter glass bottle was not crushed. The contractor revised the procedure and did not see any unbroken bottles in subsequent runs.

Canister Storage Building (CSB): The leader of the contractor readiness assessment team for the restart of receiving Multi-canister Overpacks (MCOs) observed various operations this week. In general, the work was well planned and performed. Minor errors in the procedure used to transfer MCOs were identified by the team lead but were appropriately addressed. The site rep identified a number of other minor issues with the procedure and conduct of operations that the contractor plans to address.