

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 4, 2025

TO: Technical Director
FROM: Idaho National Laboratory (INL) Cognizant Engineer
SUBJECT: INL Report for July 2025

DNFSB Staff Activity. The DNFSB INL cognizant engineer held weekly meetings to maintain awareness of site activities, including attending event fact findings, management reviews, integrated project team reviews, and facility plan-of-the-day meetings. The DNFSB staff did not conduct any on-site activities in July.

Idaho Cleanup Project (ICP)–Idaho Environmental Coalition (IEC) Initiates Radiation Protection (RP) Standdown. On July 9, 2025, due to recent events, IEC management declared an Occurrence Reporting and Processing System (ORPS) reportable management concern and initiated a radiation protection standdown. Over the last year, IEC had identified a trend of personnel failures in adhering to RP program requirements, such as wearing dosimetry and logging onto Radiological Work Permits (RWPs) when required. In response, IEC conducted a common cause analysis and implemented corrective actions. However, the recent events indicate that implementation of the corrective actions for this adverse trend has not been effective. Although these events are individually of low safety significance and below the ORPS reportable threshold, the continuing trend drove the issue to be elevated to a management concern. IEC has implemented additional corrective actions, including instituting RWP briefs in addition to the work-order briefs prior to commencing RP work, and staff training. Some of the recent associated events are discussed below.

Idaho Nuclear Technical and Engineering Center (INTEC)–Maintenance Worker Entered Radiological Buffer Area (RBA) Without Required Dosimetry. On July 7, 2025, a maintenance worker entered an RBA without the required personnel dosimetry. The event occurred during the process of changing the compressed gas cylinders in a personnel contamination monitor in the Waste Management area of the New Waste Calcine Facility. Immediate actions included verifying postings at all swing gates and performing housekeeping at all RBA entrances, restricting worker access to sentinel (the system tracking personnel radiation exposure totals and limits), and stopping other routine activities until a management review was completed.

INTEC–Waste Management Operator Entered Posted Radiological Area While Not on Radiological Work Permit (RWP). On July 8, 2025, a waste management operator entered a posted Radiation Area (RA) without being signed into an RWP as required. The management review established that the operator had signed into the appropriate RWP upon starting work for the day but signed out after completing the work, without realizing that the entire area was being controlled as an RA. It was noted that the pre-job briefing did not mention the presence of a Real-Time Radiography drum in the area as the basis for designating the entire area as an RA. Radiation Protection personnel verified the RA was properly posted, and the operator admitted to not reading or validating the postings prior to entering the area.

Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project (AMWTP)–IEC Landlord Employee Entered Posted Radiological Area in WMF-676 Without Proper Dosimetry. On July 8, 2025, an employee assigned to the landlord section entered a posted area in the WMF-676 treatment facility without the proper Personal Nuclear Accident Dosimeter (PNAD). The management review and fact-finding meeting established that the employee's PNAD had fallen off his lanyard after exiting his utility vehicle. Another employee found the PNAD in the parking lot of the facility. Since this was the third event in two days, IEC management began requiring all employees to physically touch their dosimeter prior to entering a posted radiological area after reading the postings.