

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 12, 2025

TO: Technical Director
FROM: Oak Ridge Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Oak Ridge Activity Report for Week Ending September 12, 2025

Building 9204-2E: Facility operations management (FOM) in Building 9204-2 recently discovered the emergency notification system (ENS) was in a degrading condition due to lowering volume levels throughout the facility. The criticality accident alarm system (CAAS) annunciation in Building 9204-2 is partly reliant on ENS speakers in a few areas and is an extension of the credited system in the Building 9204-2E safety basis. CNS recently completed an extensive upgrade on the Building 9204-2E CAAS, replacing all of the speakers and detection probes, but did not upgrade or repair the aging portion of the system in Building 9204-2. Instead, CNS relies on both CAAS dedicated horns and ENS speakers to provide full annunciation coverage in Building 9204-2 (see 4/5/2024 report). The assistant operations manager (AOM) entered a work request for troubleshooting and repair of the 9204-2 ENS, but the issue was not prioritized by maintenance. Last Thursday, following a severe weather event, the ENS degraded to the point where only short portions of announcements could be heard. The AOM elevated the work request and inquired with fire protection engineering (FPE) about potential compensatory measures, but did not notify the operations manager of the issue. FPE declined to issue compensatory measures based on the expectation that the problem would be resolved quickly. Four days later, Building 9204-2 FOM began briefing the need for radios in the building; however, they did not post signs at building entrances that would alert unbriefed personnel to the deficiency. The operations manager (OM) was informed of the issue the following day and subsequently performed a walkdown of the areas to assess the problem. He followed up with an operability determination for the CAAS in Building 9204-2E and, with a system engineering evaluation, declared the system operable. The OM did ultimately get FPE to issue compensatory measures requiring radios to be carried by, or be in the immediate vicinity, of all personnel in Building 9204-2, as well as having all entrances to the building posted with this requirement.

Transuranic Waste Processing Center (TWPC): A resident inspector (RI) conducted an independent review of the TWPC fire protection program. The review included an in-depth evaluation of the United Cleanup of Oak Ridge, LLC (UCOR) fire protection program procedure, TWPC fire hazard analysis, technical safety requirements, and supporting documentation. The RI completed in-field walkdowns of the main process building to compare documented controls, assumptions, stated practices, and approved equivalencies to actual in-field conditions. The RI noted several good practices, such as covering staged material in fiberglass welding blankets and positive housekeeping practices. During the walkdown, the RI noted that the amount of magnesium oxide sand and the labeling on the containers located in the gloveboxes did not meet the procedural requirements. The RI reported these observations to the facility manager on duty, who took prompt action to correct the issue. The RI made several additional observations related to documentation in the fire hazard analysis. The RI provided those observations to the fire protection engineer via the facility representative and will complete follow-up discussions next week.