

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 27, 2026

**TO:** Technical Director  
**FROM:** Hanford Site Resident Inspectors  
**SUBJECT:** Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending February 27, 2026

**Low Activity Waste Facility:** A resident inspector observed an emergency preparedness drill, noting that the scenario was identical to the drill that was observed last month (see 1/16/2026 report). The RI was informed that this drill would also be used to evaluate radiological hazard assessor performance, despite the scenario not including any radiological release, contamination, or the complete establishment of a cold line in the field. The resident inspectors shared their concerns that these scenarios are not suited to qualifying radiological response with WTCC and HFO management. HFO subsequently investigated and reported that the contractor is developing additional scenarios with both a radiological and a hazardous chemical component and has committed to using the scenarios for radiological staff qualifications.

**Central Waste Complex:** In preparation for shipping transuranic waste containers offsite to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), CPCCo has initiated a Project Startup Review (PSR) for their certified program activities. This is a restart of the certified program activities that terminated in 2011 due to funding limitations. The WIPP certified program is a system of controls consisting of activities performed using a combination of CPCCo and Central Characterization Program training, procedures, personnel, and equipment. The PSR does not assess the adequacy and implementation of required activities to meet the WIPP waste acceptance criteria requirements. Those elements are evaluated by the Carlsbad Field Office, the New Mexico Environment Department, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This review includes onsite activities such as container inspection and weighing, high-energy real-time radiography, nondestructive assay (NDA), and flammable gas analysis. A resident inspector observed one of the NDA activities involving operation of the Super High Efficiency Neutron Counter.

**Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility (WESF):** WESF personnel completed loading a second transportable storage container (TSC) with 120 cesium capsules and installed the inner lid and port cover on the container. While workers were using a crane to lift a shield ring to allow subsequent installation of the outer lid on the TSC, personal dosimeter dose-rate alarms occurred for individuals standing near the container. The workers responded correctly and moved to low-dose areas. Consequently, although two personal dosimeters registered dose rates exceeding 600 millirem per hour, subsequent dosimetry review determined that the event resulted in no measurable dose. Management held a meeting to review the event. Information collected during the meeting shows that, although the field work supervisor addressed the hazard during the pre-job meeting, the workers who were standing near the TSC were not aware that exposure rates would increase substantially when the crane lifted the annular shield ring. Attendees also noted that, while the procedure originally required individuals to leave the canyon during the lift, a recent procedure change allowed workers to remain in the canyon if they moved to low dose areas. Management allowed this change to reduce the number of canyon entry and exit evolutions. After the meeting, management modified the procedure to restore the requirement for workers to exit the canyon during this and similar evolutions. Contractor management continues to review the event to identify required corrective actions.