

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 6, 2026

TO: Technical Director
FROM: Hanford Site Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending March 6, 2026

Hanford Site: Resident inspectors met with field office personnel to discuss the status of efforts to implement additional tank waste stabilization capacity using grout. As the Advanced Modular Pretreatment System and West Area Risk Management facilities come online, the site will have the capacity to feed pretreated waste to the Low Activity Waste (LAW) facility and to commercial companies for grouting and disposal offsite to accelerate the stabilization and disposal of tank waste. Bids for this scope of work are expected to be awarded later this year.

LAW Facility: A resident inspector observed a tabletop session with WTCC personnel from multiple organizations to discuss a new emergency preparedness drill scenario proposed for the LAW facility. This scenario, while not yet finalized, incorporates different hazards and locations than current drills conducted by WTCC. The resident inspector notes that this type of scenario should improve the contractor's drill program and challenge emergency response organization members (see 1/16/2026 and 2/27/2026 reports).

A resident inspector observed a fact-finding meeting for the discovery of hazardous energy during a safe-to-work check of the melter 2 west discharge chamber. Personnel verified that the lockout/tagout (LOTO) was correctly performed. The safe-condition check performed during implementation of the LOTO was based on checking voltage for the load-side screws rather than in the discharge chamber due to access issues. Electricians troubleshooting the condition after the event discovered that the as-built condition of the wiring to the heaters in the discharge chamber did not match the plant drawings, and previous work had only isolated all heaters at the same time, preventing discovery during prior work activities. The fact finding was well run, and participants correctly identified the need to perform an extent of condition on the heating elements for both melters to either update plant drawings or correct the wiring to match the drawings. Based on the available information, this condition has existed since commissioning of the LAW facility, revealing that there are still legacy issues with configuration management at the facility that plant management will need to address as they are identified.

Solids Waste Operations Complex (SWOC): The SWOC safety basis uses a statistical material-at-risk (MAR) algorithm derived, in part, from statistical parameters associated with the material inventory in the complex to determine accident consequences for storing and handling waste. Following an inquiry by HFO in February, CPCCo nuclear safety personnel determined the MAR algorithm had not been updated annually as required to ensure it remained bounding of actual material inventory. CPCCo declared a violation of a credited hazard control and issued timely orders to suspend radioactive waste container handling and vehicle operation at SWOC until the MAR algorithm could be validated as bounding. A resident inspector observed a kickoff for an event investigation. During the meeting, it was identified that the annual assessment requirements for the MAR algorithm update were unclear given ambiguity regarding the specific meaning of an annual update. Further, it was recognized that the operational requirement for the update was obscured by residing only in the notes of the implementing procedure.