

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 13, 2026

**TO:** Technical Director  
**FROM:** Los Alamos Site Resident Inspectors  
**SUBJECT:** Los Alamos Activity Report for the Week Ending March 13, 2026

**Plutonium Facility–Work Control:** In mid-February, a contamination event occurred at the Plutonium Facility due to a small hole in a glovebox glove; a worker missed the contamination during initial scans, and it was detected when attempting to leave the facility. The amount of contamination was minimal. Investigations found a small hole in the glovebox glove near where the glove connects with the glovebox. The location of the hole would make it very difficult to identify; however, during a fact-finding meeting the worker self-identified that they did not conduct proper frisking techniques when exiting the glovebox, which resulted in missing the contamination earlier in the process. The cause of the hole in the glove was found to be nearby scaffolding impacting the gloves (which are typically tied off outside the glovebox when not in active use) while the scaffolding parts were moved in and out of storage next to the operational glovebox. This intersection of operations and ongoing construction activities to upgrade Plutonium Facility infrastructure is a known challenge, and the contractor is looking into ways to mitigate future incidents. Workers identified the use of covers for glovebox gloves when not in use as well as better coordination of the storage and use of construction equipment near operational glovebox lines. The resident inspectors observed that the workers involved in this incident showed a desire to work across organizational units to resolve this issue, which contributed to a highly effective fact-finding meeting.

**Plutonium Facility–Safety Basis:** Plutonium Infrastructure personnel recently completed the structural framework associated with new equipment installation in a laboratory room. With this installation complete, facility operations personnel verified that the installation met seismic design category 3 and exited the safety-basis temporary modification in place to protect gloveboxes containing molten plutonium from construction impacts (see 11/5 and 12/13/2024 reports). This week, the resident inspectors walked down this new construction.

**Plutonium Facility–Infrastructure:** On Friday, facility operations personnel placed the freight elevator back into service after an outage to refurbish the elevator’s controls and safety interlocks. Facility engineering anticipates the refurbishment will resolve reliability issues with the elevator (see 7/25/2025 report). The resident inspectors observed final activities to return the elevator to service.

**Transuranic Liquid Waste (TLW) Facility:** Last Friday, Triad submitted the safety basis for the TLW Facility to the NNSA Field Office for approval. This revision is intended to address Field Office comments on a draft submitted in 2024 (see 6/28/2024 report).

This Wednesday, Triad transmitted its quarterly startup notification report to the NNSA Field Office. It includes one item, the startup of the TLW Facility planned for October 2026. Triad proposed federal and contractor readiness reviews, but the formal evaluation of what level of readiness review will be performed has not been completed yet.