

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 13, 2026

TO: Technical Director
FROM: Oak Ridge Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Oak Ridge Activity Report for Week Ending February 13, 2026

Staff Activity: Members of the Board's staff traveled to Y-12 as part of a review to evaluate aspects of the Extended Life Program. CNS established the Extended Life Program as a systematic approach to manage the aging of Y-12 production facilities. The Board's staff conducted walkdowns and had follow-on discussions of electrical and general topics.

Nuclear Criticality Safety: Production personnel discovered two containers, commonly referred to as birdcages, that were loaded over the nuclear criticality safety evaluation (CSE) mass limits. They made the discovery after the containers had been moved between facilities. The CSE states specific mass limits for birdcages as well as requirements for two personnel to verify that the special nuclear material vehicle loading limits are met prior to introducing the material, and that the containers being transported are properly loaded. This week, CNS violated this CSE multiple times by loading the two birdcages over the mass limit as well as not verifying the loading prior to multiple moves of the loaded birdcages. Upon discovery of the non-compliance, CNS followed their abnormal operating procedure and corrected the loading. In October 2022, CNS personnel overloaded a birdcage in one of the nuclear facilities and moved it to another nuclear facility (see 11/4/2022 and 11/11/2022 reports). CNS performed an extent-of-condition review for that previous event, including a review of all birdcage loadings in the three main nuclear facilities. As a result of finding multiple other discrepancies during that extent-of-condition review, CNS developed 33 actions to prevent recurrence of the issue. CNS reviewed the actions previously taken from that event and plans to perform an event investigation on the current issue next week to determine additional actions needed to prevent these non-compliant loading and transport activities.

Building 9212: The Holden Gas Furnace (HGF) system engineer discovered that the as-found condition of a natural gas pressure switch was out of tolerance in the non-conservative direction during the annual calibration. The calibration is part of a surveillance requirement prescribed by the technical safety requirements. The purpose of the pressure switch is to control automatic interlocks that close and prevent the pilot and main burner gas block valves from opening if abnormal conditions exist. A shift manager placed the HGF on hold due to the out-of-tolerance as-found condition. CNS filed an occurrence report for the degradation of a safety-significant system that is required to be operable. The system remains on hold while CNS completes the potential-inadequacy-of-the-safety-analysis determination process.

Seasonal Facility Planning: A resident inspector, the YFO assistant operations manager, and the YFO maintenance program manager met with the head of CNS site operations to discuss the site's seasonal facility planning program. The head of CNS operations discussed the process by which CNS prioritizes work and the current overall approach to seasonal facility planning. CNS has made multiple improvements to the program since the freeze events that occurred in 2022 (see 12/30/2022 report). The processes being undertaken are a vast improvement from the previous approach and are advantageous to the site; however, the program could benefit if those initiatives were better documented in the procedure.