

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 8, 2026

Los Alamos National Laboratory Resident Inspectors Activity Report for Week Ending May 8, 2026

Staff Activity: The Board's National Transuranic Waste Program (NTP) cognizant engineer was onsite over the last weekend to observe a generator site technical review (GSTR) of drill-and-drain operations at Area G. These operations to remove liquid from waste drums to make them compliant restarted in 2022 but have been infrequently performed due to the prioritization of corrugated metal pipe activities. GSTRs were an enhancement to the NTP process that DOE implemented after the 2014 radiological release event at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The GSTR team, which was composed of representatives from the WIPP management and operations contractor, performed this review that was tailored to monitor whether the drill-and-drain process generates waste that can be shipped safely to WIPP. Additional observers included representatives from the Carlsbad Field Office and the New Mexico Environment Department. The GSTR team will provide its report to N3B in approximately one month.

Safety Basis: On Monday, Triad Nuclear Safety personnel issued a report clarifying their positions and strategies regarding implementation of DOE-STD-1027, *Hazard Categorization of DOE Nuclear Facilities*. The report specifically emphasizes their approach to the management of sealed sources. It states that the 2018 version of the standard will be the main categorization document for establishing hazard categorization. However, the original requirements of the 1992 version will apply to sealed sources (see 4/10/2026 report) when the facility presents no hazards incompatible with source design and certification.

Plutonium Facility—Conduct of Operations: Last week, Triad issued a new standing order focused on expectations for the verification of workers' qualifications and authorization to conduct work. This standing order is a contractor-initiated corrective action in response to challenges they identified in their work control and training and qualification programs for some workers (see 3/26/2026 report). It is intended to remind managers of their requirements currently contained in Triad procedures and to clarify specific roles and responsibilities for work that crosses between organizational units.

Electrical Safety: Two weeks ago, in the Plutonium Facility, workers energized and then attempted to activate a piece of equipment. When the equipment did not function, they performed troubleshooting activities. This scope change had not been planned, nor had the electrical hazards evaluated. During this troubleshooting, personnel opened an energized 480-volt cabinet without the appropriate personal protective equipment. No one was injured. Facility management issued a stop work on electrical work associated with this activity. During a separate job on Monday, workers at PF-400 identified that voltage was still present during a job to disconnect a backup generator for transport to an offsite vendor for refurbishment. These backup generators are connected in such a way that a second power source was possible; however, this was not initially recognized. Facility personnel are re-evaluating their approach to safely disconnect this generator.