DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 16, 2026

Los Alamos National Laboratory Resident Inspectors Activity Report for Week Ending October 16, 2026

Plutonium Facility–Radiological Control: Last week, an event occurred that resulted in contamination of personal protective equipment, the floor, and equipment. No skin contamination occurred. Workers determined that the source of contamination was a bag containing items recently removed from a glovebox that was not fully sealed. Radiological Control Technicians found contamination readings greater than ten million disintegrations per minute at the mouth of the bag, which was the limit of their instrument. Further investigation by management determined the workers performing the bagging operation had not completed the training required to perform the bagging procedure. Management discussed additional concerns at a post-job review including handling of a glove breach on the same glovebox line and an inadequate response to a continuous air monitoring (CAM) alarm that occurred during the work. Further investigation determined the CAM alarm was a nuisance alarm, but workers did not respond adequately before that determination was made. Facility personnel secured the bag and decontaminated the impacted room areas. The management team is developing several corrective actions.

Plutonium Facility–Configuration Management: Last week, workers inadvertently activated the fire alarm system while performing testing on the balance of plant fire alarm system. Management held a fact-finding meeting during which participants determined that the testing procedures and work documents had not been updated to match the current system configuration. Facility fire alarm systems are nearing the end of a multi-year upgrade project and personnel are implementing new operating procedures. The team discussed several corrective actions including revising the testing documents and issuing workforce communications that highlight the requirement to pause work when the procedures do not match the field conditions.

Safety Basis: On Tuesday, Triad transmitted to the NNSA Field Office an update of the milestones for developing DOE-STD-3009-2014 and DOE-STD-1228-2019 compliant safety bases. These are the most current standards for developing safety bases for hazard category (HC) 2 and 3 nuclear facilities. Since the last update, there have been several major milestones (see 2/14/2025 report). The new safety basis for the Plutonium Facility received its conditional approval in February 2026 (see 2/20/2026 report). Triad is currently addressing the Field Office's last condition of approval and performing a phased implementation of the safety basis. The second major milestone for HC-2 facilities was the transmittal of a new safety basis for the Weapons Engineering Tritium Facility in August 2026 (see 8/28/2026 report). The Field Office is currently reviewing this document. Updates to the safety basis for the HC-2 RANT Shipping Facility and Transuranic Waste Facility are pending funding. There are no plans to upgrade the safety basis for the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building unless its mission changes in the future. For the HC-3 facilities, NNSA approved the safety basis for the upcoming Transuranic Liquid Waste Facility in May 2026 (see 5/15/2026 report). With that approval, all of the HC-3 facilities except for the Radioactive Liquid Waste Treatment Facility (RLWTF) have safety bases written to DOE-STD-1228-2019. Triad is not updating the safety basis for RLWTF as it is being replaced by the Transuranic Liquid Waste Facility.