

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 27, 2019

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: Zachery S. Beauvais and Miranda McCoy, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending September 27, 2019

Safety Basis: CNS engineering determined that two safety class forklifts were in discrepant condition. The forklifts are credited in the technical safety requirements to meet the “EE rating” specified in an industry standard for electric-battery-powered industrial trucks. An offsite maintenance vendor noted that both forklifts had exposed wire, violating their EE rating. Due to communication difficulties, this information was not relayed to appropriate CNS engineering or transportation personnel for approximately one week. Once notified, CNS engineering re-labeled approximately 40 affected forklifts with “Not-Authorized” stickers and began reviewing other forklifts to determine whether they still met their EE rating. Forklift maintenance is typically performed by the Pantex battery shop. During the fact finding for this event, CNS engineering personnel questioned the level of prescriptive detail provided to the battery shop in work orders and whether the battery shop had been trained on the requirements to meet EE rating. CNS infrastructure paused electrical maintenance work on affected forklifts.

Emergency Management: The resident inspectors attended the quarterly emergency management agreement-in-principle (AIP) meeting. The AIP meetings allow NPO and CNS personnel to meet with local government officials and relevant state agencies to discuss emergency exercises, site updates, community outreach, and emergency response planning. CNS personnel presented information on recent and upcoming exercises and discussed the status of an alternate, offsite emergency operations center and ongoing revisions to the emergency planning zone (see 9/1/17 report). The revised zone will include section divisions by roads and natural features as opposed to radial slices. NPO personnel provided an update on staffing changes and the design of a new material staging facility. Attendees discussed community outreach regarding both the updated emergency planning zone map and the yearly emergency preparedness calendar, a tool provided to the public that provides information regarding alarm testing, emergency contact information, and preparedness tips for each month.

Maintenance Work Planning: CNS painters were potentially exposed to beryllium (Be) while performing paint scraping activities as part of a multi-craft effort to perform seismic repairs in a special nuclear material staging facility. The painters questioned whether Be hazards were present after waste operations directed them to apply Be labels to waste generated during the activity. CNS industrial hygiene (IH) monitored the coveralls and did not find Be but did find detectable quantities of Be in paint chips removed during the work. CNS maintenance work planners did not identify the possibility for fixed Be contamination becoming airborne during their initial hazard walkdown for the job, as there are no postings indicating the presence of Be in the facility. An individual with historic knowledge of the facility identified the hazard, prompting IH to prepare a Be work permit for the job. While the Be work permit specified additional requirements for personal protective equipment, specifically Tyvek suits and powered air-purifying respirators, the work order was issued prior to completion of this permit and these specifications were not included with the work order used by the painters. The work order publication process has contributed to other recent events (see 1/25/19 and 4/18/19 reports).