

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 31, 2002

TO: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: D. F. Owen, RFETS Site Representative
SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending January 3, 2003

Site nuclear operations were reduced due to holiday schedules. The site rep. will be out of the office from Wednesday through Friday.

Feedback and Improvement/Work Planning. The site rep. inquired on follow-up actions to certain recent events discussed below:

- As reported on November 27th, an individual had been struck on the shoulder by a 10-lb bar that had fallen 18 ft after being cut by a worker in the overhead in Building 776. A control specifying that “work areas shall be evaluated for head protection by industrial health and safety” was in the work instructions. The site rep. had inquired with DOE-RFFO and Kaiser-Hill management about specifying controls calling for on-the-job evaluations versus performing the evaluations as part of work planning and specifying definitive controls where practical. In response, Kaiser-Hill management had indicated that a site-wide lessons-learned on this event would address this issue. The site rep. did not consider that the site-wide lessons-learned, issued in mid-December, adequately communicated this work planning issue. Kaiser-Hill management stated this week that this work planning lessons-learned is being distributed in more detail to RFETS work planning personnel through the RFETS steering group on work planning (a group of facility and central safety organization personnel that focus on RFETS work planning/control issues).
- As reported on November 22nd, a worker had received a small puncture wound to a finger while placing a small component into a waste box in the Building 776; the worker received an internal dose of 180 mrem CEDE. Kaiser-Hill management had stated to the site rep. that a site-wide lessons-learned on this event would be issued referencing existing site guidance on puncture hazards and emphasize the need for work planning teams to identify and control these hazards. This site-wide lessons learned issued in late November did briefly address these factors; however, Kaiser-Hill management indicated this week that further improvement actions on control of these hazards are being sought through an evaluation by the RFETS work planning steering group planned in mid January.
- As RFETS reported in late September, a work crew drilled into a pressurized tank in Building 371. The tank was thought to have been depressurized but this was not verified either during work planning or just prior to the cut. This event had similarities with events involving a cut into a pressurized machining coolant drain line in Building 707 and a cut into a pressurized instrument air line in Building 776 (see the April 19th and July 12th site rep. reports, respectively). Kaiser-Hill management indicated this week that site-wide improvement actions on control of mechanical energy hazards are also being sought through an evaluation by the RFETS work planning steering group planned in late January. (1-C)