

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 27, 2023

**TO:** Katherine R. Herrera, Acting Technical Director  
**FROM:** A. Boussouf and D. Gutowski, Resident Inspectors  
**SUBJECT:** Los Alamos Activity Report for the Week Ending January 27, 2023

**Staff Activity:** D. Brown was on site.

**Area G–Readiness:** The contractor team continued its readiness assessment of corrugated metal pipe (CMP) size reduction activities in Dome 375. This week, N3B personnel demonstrated the loading, cutting, and packaging of a mockup CMP under chilly weather conditions requiring warm-up breaks to avoid cold stress. The demonstration included an operational drill where workers had to respond to the discovery of a tear in the bag holding the CMP. One of the assessors identified a lockout/tagout issue during the demonstration. The cutting shear is locked out when workers are cleaning the contamination control shroud surrounding it. While the worker performing the hands-on activity had a lock in place, the interface between the CMP cutting procedure and lockout/tagout documentation had weaknesses such that all lockout/tagout requirements were not completed properly. Facility management is developing corrective actions to resolve this discrepancy and prevent recurrence. The assessment team briefed the preliminary results of their review on Thursday and plan to finalize their report in February.

**Area G–Emergency Management:** As part of the readiness assessment, N3B personnel held an emergency preparedness drill. The scenario involved a process upset during CMP size reduction activities where the winch began to smoke. Workers appropriately identified the hazard, simulated use of a manual fire extinguisher, evacuated the Permacon and Dome, then met at the assembly area for accountability. During the drill critique participants identified potential areas for improvement. One idea was to considering adding additional assembly areas within the Area G fenceline to reduce travel time from work areas.

**Area G–Safety Basis:** N3B held a workshop to support development of a modern DOE-STD-3009-2014 compliant safety basis for Area G. Participants worked on topics such as atmospheric dispersion modeling, controls development, and expectations for safety management programs.

**Emergency Management:** On Wednesday, Triad held an emergency preparedness drill at the Emergency Operations Center. The scenario was a wildfire initiated by downed powerlines in Los Alamos Canyon at the northern edge of the site. The simulated conditions had the event occurring during high winds in May. The fire behavior in the scenario was challenging as flame height was too high for safe direct attack, and wind speeds were too high to deploy aerial resources. The nearest hazardous facilities to the event were Technical Area 21 and the Los Alamos Neutron Science Center. The fire's location also posed a risk to two of the limited evacuation routes out of Los Alamos County. In both reality and the drill scenario, fuel loading in Los Alamos Canyon is high as previous wildfires have not significantly impacted it. There are plans to perform fuel mitigation in the canyon later this year.

A team from the Office of Emergency Management Assessments (EA-33) in DOE's Office of Enterprise Assessments was on site as part of their assessment of the all-hazards planning basis for transuranic waste operations at the laboratory. The team expects to complete their review and issue a report in May. This is part of a complexwide assessment.