

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 12, 2003

TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: Donald Owen, Oak Ridge Site Representative
SUBJ: Activity Report for Week Ending December 12, 2003

Staff members Gwal and March and outside expert West visited Y-12 to review the fire protection program and fire protection upgrade efforts.

A. Building 9212 Electrical Fire - Update. As reported on November 21st, a small electrical fire occurred in an electrical panel supporting an office area in Building 9212. Investigation had revealed that the panel had a number of electrical non-conformances (e.g., multiple connected loads to a circuit, ground wires used as load wires, and loose circuit connections) and little or no maintenance had been performed over the years. Corrective actions were to be developed by BWXT and reviewed with YSO management.

This week, the site rep. and staff inquired about the actions defined to date. BWXT has started an effort in Building 9212 to perform thermal imaging and visual inspection of electrical panels (at least 250 panels) to identify any non-conformances followed by correction of those non-conformances that warrant quick action. To date, this effort has identified several electrical panels with hot-spot anomalies and/or other electrical non-conformances warranting quick action. Though the need for such near-term efforts in other facilities is recognized by Y-12 management, actions to address other facilities are not yet defined. Y-12 management indicated to the site rep. that these actions will be defined by the week of December 15th. (I)

B. Y-12 Activity-Level Work Planning. As first reported on June 20th, screening performed to determine whether a work scope requires a formal job hazard analysis (JHA) is based on a series of questions that establish a high threshold hazard level before a JHA is required. The site rep. had discussed this issue with YSO and BWXT management who agreed that corrective action was needed. The site rep. had noted that interim compensatory action may be warranted while developing permanent JHA process improvements (see August 1st report). As reported November 7th, YSO was to perform a review of JHA screening along with other work planning/control issues raised as a result of deficiencies with recent maintenance and modification work (e.g., a complex job on a 7500-ton press was planned without a specific JHA).

This week, the YSO review noted that no improvement action or compensatory measure on JHA screening had been accomplished (though plans were developed to revise the process by March 2004.) Following site rep. inquiry, senior YSO and BWXT management met to discuss the issue and BWXT management committed to develop a compensatory measure. On Friday, BWXT management issued a "standing order" that effectively eliminates JHA screening and mandates that JHAs be (or have been) performed for all maintenance work. (I)

C. Melton Valley Waste Processing Facility (WPF). As reported last week, DOE-ORO line management had been deciding whether to issue their declaration of readiness to the DOE Office of Environmental Management (EM) to allow the DOE-EM Operational Readiness Review (ORR) to start. This week, DOE-ORO line management did not issue their declaration of readiness due to lack of reliable demonstration of heat-sealing of bags following loading of dried waste and lack of preparations to deal with a deficient bag seal. DOE-ORO line management indicated to the site rep. that the DOE-EM ORR is now scheduled to start on January 5th. (III)