DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 19, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
J. J. McConnell, Deputy Technical Director
FROM: R. T. Davis/ T. D. Burns
SUBJECT: SRS Report for Week Ending March 19, 2004

Beryllium Contamination: Building 777-10A is a former physics laboratory which housed four low-power test reactors. It has been deactivated and is currently awaiting demolition. Some of the administrative sections of the building have been used by various site personnel since shutdown. The building has not been managed as a beryllium regulated area.

During a walk-down of Building 777-10A in early February to support upcoming facility demolition activities, WSRC personnel found a container of beryllium metal granules. In response, swipe samples were taken in the facility to determine whether significant beryllium contamination was present outside the container. On Tuesday, results of the swipe samples were provided by site analytic laboratories. These results indicated that beryllium surface contamination in some areas of the building (not the administrative sections) were more than two orders of magnitude higher than the WSRC threshold control limit (11.4 $\mu g/100cm^2$ vs. 0.2 $\mu g/100cm^2$).

The facility has now been posted as a beryllium regulated area and access is restricted. Potential for exposures is believed to be low due to minimal previous entries into areas of relatively high surface contamination. Facility demolition plans are being modified to ensure adequate worker protection from beryllium will be provided.

H-Canyon Ventilation: In a June 2002 letter to DOE (EM-1), the Board noted that degradation of the exhaust duct from the Old HB-Line ventilation system could allow an unfiltered ground level release during a canyon accident. The Board letter stated that timely resolution of this issue would be appropriate given the ongoing and long-term missions at H-Canyon. Recently, WSRC completed conceptual design for a project that will divert the Old HB-Line ventilation to the canyon exhaust tunnel and isolate the degraded duct. This modification would eliminate the potential for a ground level release.

The original plan was for detailed design and construction to be performed by a subcontractor. Because of budget constraints, WSRC will now perform the detailed design and construction internally. In addition, long lead procurements that were scheduled for this spring will be delayed until the fall. By performing the work internally, WSRC hopes to maintain the current schedule to complete this activity in mid-2005.

FB-Line: WSRC has completed 78 oxide stabilization runs in the M-9 furnaces. Facility de-inventory is approximately 40% complete and is ahead of schedule to meet the contract target of September 2005.