

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 1, 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR: T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: B.P. Broderick and R.T. Davis
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Report for Week Ending July 1, 2011

The laboratory was closed this week due to the Las Conchas wildland fire. LANL declared an operational emergency on Monday, June 27th, and the Emergency Operations Center was activated and declared operational. Only one small (less than one acre) spot fire occurred on LANL property and was extinguished within one hour. All nuclear operations were suspended this week and nuclear facilities were placed in a safe-stable configuration with the exception of the Radioactive Liquid Waste Treatment Facility (RLWTF), which did perform low level waste processing operations this week to maximize lag storage space should an extended outage at RLWTF be required.

As of Friday, the Las Conchas fire has burned over 100,000 acres and is only 3% contained; however, the threat to LANL property and nuclear facilities has been significantly reduced by extensive firefighting efforts, preventative burns and fire breaks. During the week, LANL also performed extensive fire mitigation activities throughout the laboratory to reduce fuel sources (especially around Area G). Based on the reduction in threat to laboratory from the fire on Friday afternoon, LANL terminated the operational emergency and transitioned to recovery operations mode.

On Friday, the LANL emergency director approved the recovery plan that includes facility walkdowns (including the nuclear facilities) over the weekend by the Facility Operations Directors (FODs) to determine facility status and habitability. Restart of the laboratory will be phased over two days with management and programmatic walkdowns and restoration of site services on the first day. Provided there are no significant facility issues identified by the FOD or programmatic walkdowns, LANL will reopen to all personnel on the second day. Beginning the phased restart of the laboratory is dependent on repopulation of the Los Alamos town site.