

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 21, 2003

TO: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director

FROM: D. F. Owen, RFETS Site Representative

SUBJECT: RFETS Activity Report for the Week Ending March 21, 2003

Site operations were curtailed from Tuesday thru Thursday due to a severe winter storm.

Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System (PuSPS). As noted in site rep. reports of February 7th and January 10th, PuSPS operations personnel reported that some sparking was observed with batches of less-than-80% oxide that had been through the furnace stabilization cycle. The sparking only occurred when striking the oxide with a steel tool to breakup clumps of oxide as part of obtaining a proper moisture measurement sample. Kaiser-Hill has developed a technical review paper on this issue. The paper discusses the events in detail along with possible causes and provides the conclusion that there would be no adverse impact on the safety of long term storage in DOE-STD-3013 packaging. This paper has been provided to the staff for review. (3-A)

cc

Board Members