



Two Lab employees treated for injuries

By Kathy Delucas

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Editor's Note: Information reported in this story is from an official Occurrence Report. It included initial information reported at the time of a safety incident at Technical Area 9, Building 21. A validated copy of the Occurrence Report was received by the Public Affairs Office on Tuesday (May 31). It is being provided to Lab staff for informational purposes. Laboratory Director Robert Kuckuck visited with injured staff the day of the incident and has been closely monitoring their progress. Other details of this incident will be based upon a careful, thorough and complete inquiry.

Two Laboratory employees were injured when the material they were weighing underwent a chemical reaction resulting in a release of energy last Friday, May 27. The employees, a post-doctoral researcher performing the work, and an undergraduate student observing, were following an approved Integrated Work Document and were repeating a published procedure with a normally inert chemical when the accident occurred.

Laboratory emergency response personnel responded to the scene and both employees were transported to the Los Alamos Medical Center Emergency Room where they received medical treatment. The student suffered multiple superficial pinpoint lacerations on the face and neck, and was released that afternoon with no work restrictions. The post-doc suffered multiple superficial facial and neck lacerations, with deeper lacerations and abrasions on the chest, abdomen and left hand. His left finger had a severe laceration requiring skin grafting, but there was no evidence of tendon or nerve damage. His right hand also had multiple minor lacerations.

Both employees are expected to fully recover. An investigation is under way to determine a cause of the incident.

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