

Date: Tue, 09 Feb 1999 13:25:03 -0600  
From: Meredith Brown <racer@lanl.gov>  
Subject: Blue Alert: Adjustable Ventilation Components

**TITLE: Laboratory Air Change Rate Below Specified Minimum**

IDENTIFIER: 1999-LA-LANL-ESH7-0002 DATE: February 9, 1999

**LESSONS LEARNED STATEMENT:** Reference marks or other means of properly calibrating adjustable ventilation system components such as dampers should be provided if personnel are allowed to reposition components that affect airflow in containment systems.

**DISCUSSION:** Limiting conditions for operation were invoked at the Plutonium Processing and Handling facility after personnel determined that two of the required six measurements in the annual air change rate surveillance were below the minimum change rate specified in facility procedures. Investigators subsequently concluded that the ventilation imbalance was caused by personnel moving exhaust and supplied air dampers to achieve greater negative air pressure when work was conducted that had a high probability of releasing radioactive contamination. Although personnel repositioned the dampers after hot jobs were completed, there were no reference marks to ensure that the dampers were returned to the exact position necessary to maintain adequate airflow in the ventilation system. To correct this problem, calibrated gauges were installed on the facility airflow stations. A requirement was also added to the facility rounds sheet to take daily gauge readings, which will provide a real-time indication of air change rates.

ORIGINATOR: Los Alamos National Laboratory

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DOE FUNCTIONAL CATEGORY: Configuration Management

KEYWORDS: calibration, gauges, ventilation, airflow

REFERENCES: ALO-LA-LANL-TA55-1998-0030

**FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:** Information in this report is accurate to the best of our knowledge. As a means of measuring the effectiveness of this report, please contact the originator of significant action(s) taken as a result of this report or of any technical inaccuracies you find. Your feedback is appreciated.