

# FACILITY SAFETY & NEWS

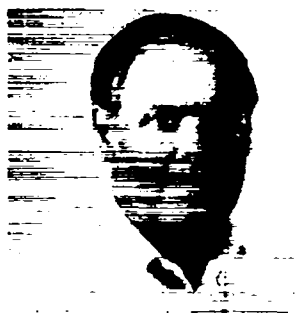
Volume 1

TA-55 Nuclear Materials Technology Bulletin

January 1993

## Stafford Returns to TA-55 as NMT-8 Group Leader and Facility Manager

Ron Stafford, the new group leader of NMT-8 and Facility Manager of TA-55, is not new to Los Alamos or TA-55. Ron received a Laboratory badge and Z number at the age of four when he arrived in Los Alamos with his family. Ron grew up on the hill, and he began working for the Laboratory soon after college.



Ron Stafford

In the mid-1970s, when plans were being made to build the Plutonium Facility, Ron was assigned an important design task. He chaired the HSE division team that provided health and safety guidance on the design of TA-55. He followed this project through construction. In 1978, when TA-55 became operational, he moved into the facility as group leader of HSE-10.

In 1986 he became deputy division leader for HSE division with responsibility for radiation protection. After five years in this position, Ron was ready for a change.

When the job of NMT-8 group leader was advertised, Ron was eager to apply. The position combined the opportunity to "come back home" with the opportunity for new challenges in facility management. Ron was delighted to be selected.

Ron is surprised that he still knows about 80% of the TA-55 employees. He has always admired the level of professionalism at TA-55, and he simply likes the people here.

Besides learning a new list of acronyms, Ron is busy learning the complex job of NMT-8 group leader. Many people, including current and previous members of NMT-8, are helping him with this transition.

Ron wants to build a strong team that will support the rest of the operations at TA-55. The main goal, as always, is to keep the facility running smoothly.

He will be selecting two deputy group leaders. He envisions one concentrating on compliance issues and the other on plant operation issues. However, the final responsibilities and organization of the group will be customized to make the best use of everyone's skills and strengths.

While the NMT-8 offices are being remodeled, Ron will occupy the same office in PF-1 that he had when he first came to TA-55. He invites everyone to stop by, say hello, and admire his low Z number.

## ERT News: Highlights from the Evacuation Exercise



Workers may not remember much about the evacuation drill on 2 November except the cold weather, but the information collected from this exercise is being used to improve our response to emergencies.

Doug Tuggle, TA-55 emergency coordinator and leader of the ERT, provided the following highlights.

### Commendations:

Following the drill, EMO complimented TA-55 on its training, organization, and preparation in performing drills.

### Worker Concerns:

The worker comment sheets showed two major concerns: (1) being detained by the monitoring at the PF-4 exits, and (2) standing in cold weather.

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*The Facility Safety and News Bulletin provides safety information and facility news to TA-55 employees. It also seeks to recognize workers who contribute to the continuous safe operation of the facility.*

**Los Alamos**  
NATIONAL LABORATORY  
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545



## Safety Award Winners

### September

Eli Vigil, NMT-1, won the first place safety award in September for his suggestion to ground the chemical storage unit located on the north side of the warehouse.

Second place was awarded to Richard Buteau, ENG-5, for his suggestion to provide a more substantial support for people to use when going through the monitoring stations in PF-4.

No award was made for third place in September.



*Eli Vigil*

### October

First place in October was awarded to Gary Chavez, NMT-8. Gary noticed a new section of drain gutter emptying directly onto the sidewalk. The freezing water created a major slipping hazard. Gary has suggested the drain spout be redirected.

No award was made for second place in October.



*Gary Chavez*

Third place was awarded to Charles Rense, NMT-5. Charles suggested the use of face-velocity air flow alarms for fume hoods in PF-3. These relatively inexpensive alarms activate when the air flow drops below a preset amount and warn the operator of a condition that might be unsafe.

The committee approved a special first place safety award for Gilbert Estrada of HS-1. Gilbert noticed oil on the floor under a Zone 1 ventilation line and immediately called it to the attention of the operating group's safety officer. Gilbert is recognized for his quick and independent action in reporting this problem before it could cause contamination.

### November

In November, first place was awarded to Geraldine Ortiz, JCI. She noticed an unguarded drop-off area on top of Room 38B in the basement of PF-4.

Someone could fall onto the concrete floor and be seriously injured. Geraldine suggested installing a steel railing to enclose this opening.

Second place went to Gregory Kelly, NMT-4, for recognizing numerous unsafe chairs in the anti-C lunch rooms. Greg has suggested replacing these chairs with new and safer chairs.

Third place was awarded to Ernesto Burciaga, NMT-9, for his suggestion to place hand monitors at the trolley work stations. The hand monitors would help identify and stop the spread of contamination if a glove should rupture at a work station.



*Geraldine Ortiz*

#### Coming Features :

##### TA-55 Program Managers:

Larry Austin  
Warren Wood  
Sam Pillay  
Wolfgang Dworzak

##### DOE Facility Representatives :

Rudy Valdez  
Johnnie Nevarez

##### TA-55 Spill Coordinator:

Lorenzo Trujillo

##### Committee:

Safety/Safeguards/Security

#### We want your ideas:

You are invited to submit ideas and suggestions for this bulletin.

We are making a specific request for stories about TA-55 employees who have used their safety training away from work.

Send ideas to Joan Farnum, MS E500, or leave her a note and she will call you.

#### How can you or a coworker be considered for a safety award?

- Place your entry in a Safety Suggestion/Action box;
- Give your entry to an FSC member; or
- Mail your entry to the Safety Office (E500) or drop it off (PF-1, Room 142).

#### Prizes:

Prizes are first place \$50.00, second place \$25.00, and third place \$10.00. Prize money goes toward the purchase of safety-related equipment for the personal use of the winner.

Awards are given for safety posters also, if they are chosen for display. For poster awards, either an idea in words or a sketch is acceptable.

Call the Safety Office (7-2556) for more information.

## Chemical Safety Committee



*Back row, left to right:  
Cipriano Gomez,  
Gene Walter, Bill Zwick,  
Pete Wallace, and  
Johnny Quintana*

*Front row, left to right:  
Mary Ann Stroud,  
Nancy Butler, Jim Dyke,  
Dennis Padilla, and  
Laura Jarvinen*

*Not Shown:  
Louis Schulte,  
Marvin Maestas,  
Jose Archuleta, Bart Flamm,  
David Huerta, Rick Romero,  
Doug Tuggle, Bob Mathews,  
Margaret Trujillo, and  
Laura Walker*

## New Committee Promotes Chemical Safety at TA-55

The Chemical Safety Committee, one of the new TA-55 safety and advisory committees, works on ensuring safe storage, use, and disposal of chemicals.

### Membership

Every group that handles chemicals at TA-55 provides a member to this committee. Additional members come from the Training Center, JCI, and HS-5. The TA-55 safety officer and the ERT coordinator are also members.

### Contacts

If you have questions or concerns about chemicals, you can ask your representative or contact the committee chair, Bill Zwick, at 5-4407. If the members of the committee don't know the answer to a question about a specific chemical problem, they can get in touch with advisors throughout the Laboratory who have specific chemical knowledge.

### Duties

The committee has other duties besides providing chemical guidance to TA-55 personnel. They also help interpret standards, policies, and laws about chemicals and make sure these are applied properly at TA-55.

### Chemical Hygiene Plan

Thus far the committee's focus has been on implementing the Chemical Hygiene Plan for TA-55 employees. This plan helps protect workers from exposure to hazardous chemicals. Most workers will notice little difference in their day-to-day operations since the CHP centralizes and formalizes many requirements already covered by existing ARs and policies. TA-55 employees will soon be introduced to the CHP in site-wide safety meetings.

### Surveys

You may see committee members walking through the chemical handling and storage areas at TA-55. They are identifying good practices and pointing out problem areas.

Chemicals and the rules that govern their use are becoming more and more complex. Thus, the work of the Chemical Safety Committee is vital to everyone at TA-55.

**To Your Good Health**

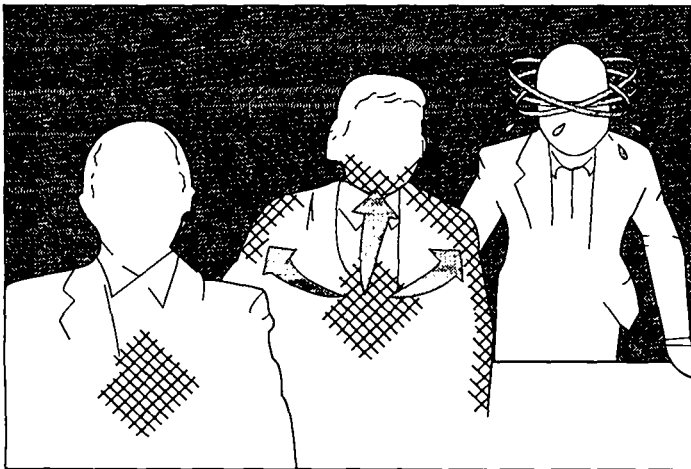
by Jan Croasdell  
Heart Month

**How to Recognize a Heart Attack**

A heart attack can strike anyone, anywhere, anytime. And when one occurs, there's no time for delay.

The symptoms of a heart attack vary, but the usual warning signs include:

- **uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing or pain in the center of the chest lasting for two minutes or more;**
- **pain spreading to the shoulders, neck, jaw, arms or back; and/or**
- **dizziness, fainting, sweating, nausea, or shortness of breath.**



pressure in the chest

spreading pain

dizziness/sweating

It's common for heart attack victims to deny they're having a heart attack. The thought of having a heart attack is scary. Also, they may be afraid to risk the embarrassment of a "false alarm."

The bottom line is, if you think that you or someone else is having a heart attack — **Don't wait! Get help! Call 55-911 and/or 9-911. Don't try to drive yourself to the hospital!**



Each year people are injured by slipping on icy spots in parking lots. Wear the proper shoes, walk with care, and notify NMT-8 of especially slick places.

Contact lenses may now be worn in the laboratory, if you wear the appropriate eye protection for the job over them.

**NOTICE:**

**New TA-55 Spill Coordinator**

**Lorenzo Trujillo** is the new TA-55 spill coordinator. Pete Wallace and Gene Walter are the alternates.

If you need a spill coordinator, call the Operations Center, **55-911**. The Center knows who is on duty.

Change the name and phone number for spill coordinator on all signs, SOPs, and other safety documents.

The next Facility Safety and News Bulletin will have a feature article on Lorenzo.

# SAFETY

## Construction Begins on Expansion of Security Station 402 (PF-9)

An expansion of Station 402 and the addition of an Access Control Center will soon change the face of TA-55.

The construction contract is scheduled to be awarded in mid-January. Ron Holmes, Building Manager, hopes the construction will be underway in late January or early February. The completion date will be about six months after construction begins. Once construction is complete, OS-10 will have x-ray and monitoring equipment installed and checked out before the new doors are opened.

Meanwhile, a new plastic roof has been installed in front of Station 402 to give workers some protection from the weather this winter. There will also be a covered area in front of the expanded Station 402 for those who may still have to wait in line.

### Plans for Access Control Center

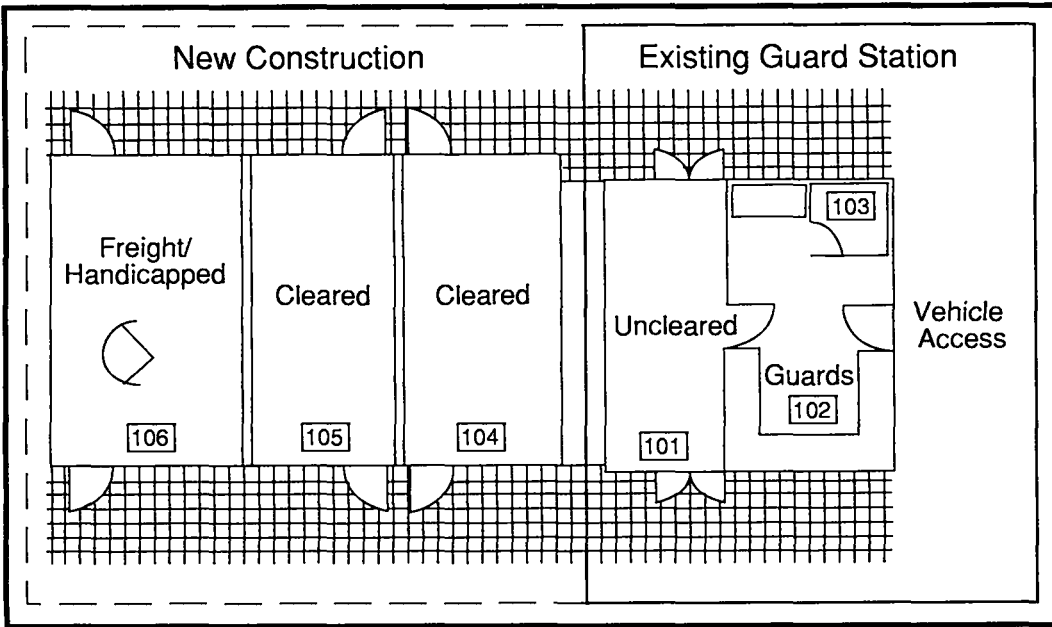
Visitors who are waiting for escorts or paperwork often clog Station 402. A new building will move this function outside the protected area.

Cathy Blackwell is project leader of the team that is planning the construction of

an Access Control Center. This center will work with Security Station 402 to make sure that those entering TA-55 have met all qualifications before access is granted. Both security and safety concerns will have to be satisfied.

Construction of the center will begin in about a year. It will be built in an area west of the security station in what is now part of the parking lot.

In addition to speeding up the entry process at the security station, this new center will allow TA-55 to greet its many visitors in a more professional way.



### Expansion of Station 402

If everything goes according to plan, the long line of workers waiting to enter Station 402 in the mornings will disappear next fall.

A major expansion of Station 402 will increase the number of personnel access doors from one to four. (See figure.) All four checkpoints will be operating during the hours when most employees are arriving or leaving. One of the passageways will be wide enough for individuals in wheelchairs or for those bringing in large parcels.



MAR - 9 1993

REPRODUCTION  
COPY**News From Division Office**  
*by Del Harbur***A Self-Cleaning Nuclear Processing Plant: Goal of the Future**

We have taken part in tremendous change over the past year. We can be proud of what the positive side of this change has brought us:

- Innovation and advancements in technology are alive and well at TA-55.
- The concepts of conduct of operations, formality of operations, and continuous quality improvement are no longer foreign to us. These concepts have become tools for redesigning administrative and technical processes to make them more cost effective, safe, and environmentally sound.

Have we arrived? Not yet! Are we making changes in the right direction? I believe the answer is a resounding yes! As we move into the new year, I need help from each of you as we embark on a change that will have a positive influence not only on our future, but on the future of the world.

This critical change is in the area of how we deal with waste. All of us have become acutely aware of waste minimization over the past decade. It has permeated our thoughts in developing innovative technology as well as in performing operations. We have made great advances in waste minimization, but we still fall far short of the goal we must achieve in the future.

I am convinced that we have the intellectual capability at Los Alamos to remove all hazardous and toxic constituents from residues and waste. This must become our goal. Our vision must focus on a plutonium processing facility that is "self-cleaning." The nuclear industry is strangling on its own waste. Whether intended for weapons or commercial energy, nuclear energy is burdened by a millstone of illusive and unfulfilled promises for solving waste repository problems. The negative legacy of waste can be put to rest only with the demonstration of a self-cleaning nuclear processing plant. Such a demonstration will become the enabling technology for realizing the promises of nuclear energy in the future.

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**ERT News continued**

The monitoring at PF-4 exits is done during drills to simplify MC&A procedures. In a real emergency, this monitoring will be done in the assembly area.

Organizers will try to schedule the next drill during better weather. However, DOE and the EMO may require some adverse weather drills in the future. In addition, some of these may involve practice in moving the assembly areas to safer or warmer places.

**Pointers for PF-4 Workers:**

• If you're in PF-4 when an evacuation alarm sounds, go out the nearest door, which may or may not be through the guard stations.

• If you have exited PF-4 and are using the badge readers in the assembly area, remember you can use any one of the three badge readers. In November, only one person used the reader nearest the guard station.

Doug is still interested in comments or concerns about the evacuation. He can be reached at 7-9364.



Emergency exercise "victim" Bart Ortiz is transported to LAMC.