



July 30, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: Craig Zamuda
Director, Office of Environment, Security, Safety & Health,
Fossil Energy, Headquarters, U.S. Department of Energy (FE-7)

FROM: Hector M. Rodriguez
Environment, Safety & Health Manager,
Albany Research Center

SUBJECT: Review of Actions at the Albany Research Center Concerning
Departmental Electrical Safety Initiative

As part of the Secretary of Energy's Departmental Electrical Safety Initiative, all Fossil Energy (FE) sites were asked to provide additional diligence concerning electrical safety via Assistant Secretary of Fossil Energy (ASFE) memorandum (dated June 25, 2004). A complete review of the Albany Research Center (ARC) electrical safety program was initiated as part of this electrical safety initiative, including actions already taken or planned for implementation, which are being reported by this memorandum. Specifically, ARC was requested to:

- Review ARC near miss reporting processes and practices,
- Reiterate to ARC personnel the importance of reporting all near misses,
- Circulate lessons learned from all pertinent near miss incidents,
- Review appropriate industry electrical safety best practices, and
- Evaluate the effectiveness of ARC electrical safety procedures and processes and make changes to improve electrical safety operations.

During recent months, ARC has implemented several specific improvements to its electrical safety program, including: emphasis of electrical safety during site safety inspections, updating the ARC ES&H Intranet webpage to include links to electrical safety trade and regulatory agencies, including the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and its Recalls page (since many of the CPSC recalls involve electrical items), compilation of electrical emergency shutdown switches for the entire site into emergency response procedures, additional communications concerning electrical safety and near miss reporting in weekly bulletins and e-mail correspondence, electrical safety training (including safety at home) for ARC employees, and specific electrical safety orientation briefings between ARC and its contractors/ subcontractors, including feedback on program interfaces and actions. Long-term projects concerning electrical safety include: providing for electrical safety (including emergency

shutdown procedures) as part of safe operations in all equipment standard operating procedures (SOPs), providing detailed lock-out/tag-out information in the SOP or posted at the equipment (including circuit breaker panel circuit and location), incorporation of key ES&H personnel onto automated e-mail notification systems for electrical safety near miss/recall information, and a detailed review of the high-voltage distribution system at ARC to prioritize future equipment replacement plans. Additional electrical system improvement projects have also been recently implemented, including upgrades to major high-voltage switchgear, aged transformer and circuit breaker replacement/upgrades, and power meter installation at critical locations to ensure the adequate monitoring of critical on-site electrical distribution systems. Also, as part of the ARC continuous improvement process, ARC is in the process of enhancing its electrical safety, preventative maintenance, and near miss/lessons learned procedures, with planned revisions expected in early FY2005. Additional electrical safety training is also scheduled for FY2005, including specific training for electrical tradespersons.

ARC remains committed to all environmental, safety, and health (ES&H) issues, especially those concerning electrical safety. If you need any further information, please contact me at 541-967-5816 or via e-mail at rodriguez@alrc.doe.gov or Steve Curfman, ARC Safety Engineer at 541-967-5938 or via e-mail at curfman@alrc.doe.gov .

cc:

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