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U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

In the Matter of Louisiana Energy Services, LP

Docket No. 70-3103-ML Official Exhibit No. LES 132-M

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6.0 CHEMICAL PROCESS SAFETY

This chapter describes the Louisiana Energy Services (LES) plan for managing chemical process safety and demonstrating that chemical process safety controls meet the requirements of 10 CFR 70 (CFR, 2003a) thereby providing reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public and facility employees is protected. The chapter describes the chemical classification process, the hazards of chemicals of concern, process interactions with chemicals affecting licensed material and/or hazardous chemicals produced from licensed material, the methodology for evaluating hazardous chemical consequences, and the chemical safety assurance features.

The chemical process safety program for the National Enrichment Facility (NEF) is similar to attributes for chemical safety which were submitted for Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) review in the LES license application for the Claiborne Enrichment Center (LES, 1993). The NRC staff evaluated these prior attributes and concluded in NUREG-1491 (NRC, 1994) that the operation of the facility would be adequately safe with respect to chemical processes and hazards.

The NEF chemical process safety program meets the acceptance criteria in Chapter 6 of NUREG-1520 (NRC, 2002) and complies with 10 CFR 70.61 (CFR, 2003b), 70.62 (CFR, 2003c) and 70.64 (CFR, 2003d).

The information provided in this chapter, the corresponding regulatory requirement and the section of NUREG-1520 (NRC, 2002) Chapter 6 in which the NRC acceptance criteria are presented are summarized below:

Information Category and Requirement	10 CFR 70 Citation	NUREG-1520 Chapter 6 Reference
Section 6.1 Chemical Information		
• Properties and Hazards	70.62(c)(1)(ii)	6.4.3.1
Section 6.2 Chemical Process Information		
• General Information	70.65(b)(3)	6.4.3.1
• Design Basis, Materials, Parameters	70.62(b)	6.4.3.1
• Process Chemistry, Chemical Interaction		6.4.3.2
Section 6.3 Chemical Hazards Analysis		
• Methodology, Scenarios, Evaluation	70.65(b)(3)	6.4.3.2
Section 6.4 Chemical Safety Assurance		
• Management, Configuration Control, Design, BDC, Maintenance, Training, Procedures, Audits, Emergency Planning, Incident Investigation	70.65(b)(4)	6.4.3.2 6.4.3.3

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6.1 CHEMICAL INFORMATION

This section addresses the criteria utilized to classify all site chemicals based on their potential for harm and as defined by regulatory requirements. It also presents information on the properties of those chemicals.

6.1.1 Chemical Screening and Classification

Table 6.1-1, Chemicals – Hazardous Properties, provides the listing of chemicals and related chemical wastes that are expected to be in use at the NEF. Chemical formulas in this Chapter utilize subscripting per standard convention. The hazardous properties of each chemical and related chemical waste have been listed. Also, each chemical or related waste has been classified into one of three categories (NEF Classes): Chemicals of Concern (Class 1), Interaction Chemicals (Class 2), or Incidental Chemicals (Class 3).

The definition of each classification is provided below.

Tables 6.1-2 through 6.1-5 are the basic chemical inventories for the facility. Each of these tables lists a major facility structure, area, and/or system and an associated inventory of significant chemicals/chemical usage for each area. These tables do not include the listing of all incidental sludges, wastes, and waste streams which are presented in Table 6.1-1 and do not include those chemicals that have been characterized as Class 3 materials and that are not a stored "chemical". As such, those chemicals not included are not a process safety concern. Complete inventories of chemicals and chemical wastes (including incidental sludges, wastes, and waste streams) by area are provided in Chapter 2 of the Environmental Report.

6.1.1.1 Chemicals of Concern (Class 1)

Chemicals of Concern (NEF Class 1) are determined based on one or more characteristics of the chemical and/or the quantity in storage/use at the facility. For licensed material or hazardous chemicals produced from licensed materials, chemicals of concern are those that, in the event of release have the potential to exceed any of the concentrations defined in 10 CFR 70 (CFR, 2003a) as listed below.

<u>High Risk Chemicals of Concern</u>

1. An acute worker dose of 1 Sv (100 rem) or greater total effective dose equivalent.
2. An acute dose of 0.25 Sv (25 rem) or greater total effective dose equivalent to any individual located outside the controlled area.
3. An intake of 30 mg or greater of uranium in soluble form by any individual located outside the controlled area.

4. An acute chemical exposure to an individual from licensed material or hazardous chemicals produced from licensed material that:

   (i) Could endanger the life of a worker, or

   (ii) Could lead to irreversible or other serious, long-lasting health effects to any individual located outside the controlled area.

Intermediate Risk Chemicals of Concern

1. An acute worker dose of 0.25 Sv (25 rem) or greater total effective dose equivalent.

2. An acute dose of 0.05 Sv (5 rem) or greater total effective dose equivalent to any individual located outside the controlled area.

3. A 24-hour averaged release of radioactive material outside the restricted area in concentrations exceeding 5000 times the values in Table 2 of Appendix B to 10 CFR 20 (CFR, 2003e).

4. An acute chemical exposure to an individual from licensed material or hazardous chemicals produced from licensed material that:

   (i) Could lead to irreversible or other serious, long-lasting health effects to a worker, or

   (ii) Could cause mild transient health effects to any individual located outside the controlled area.

Non-Licensed Chemicals of Concern

For those chemicals that are not related to licensed materials, chemicals of concern are those that are listed and handled above threshold quantities of either of the following standards:

1. 29 CFR 1910.119 (CFR, 2003f) – OSHA Process Safety Management

2. 40 CFR, 68 (CFR, 2003g) – EPA Risk Management Program.

These chemicals represent, based on their inherent toxic, reactive, or flammable properties, a potential for severe chemical release and/or acute chemical exposure to an individual that:

   (i) Could endanger the life of a worker, or

   (ii) Could lead to irreversible or other serious, long-lasting health effects to any individual located outside the controlled area.

It is noted here, that uranium hexafluoride (UF_6) is the only licensed material-related chemical of concern (NEF Class 1) that will be used at the facility. There are no non-licensed chemicals of concern at the facility.

6.1.1.2 Interaction Chemicals (Class 2)

Interaction chemicals (NEF Class 2) are those chemicals/chemical systems that require evaluation for their potential to precipitate or propagate accidents in chemical of concern (NEF Class 1) systems, but by themselves are not chemicals of concern.

6.1.1.3 Incidental Chemicals (Class 3)

The facility will use other chemicals that are neither chemicals of concern nor interaction chemicals. Some of these incidental chemicals (NEF Class 3) include those that have the potential to result in injurious occupational and/or environmental exposure, but represent no potential for acute exposure to the public and which via their nature, quantity, and/or use, have no potential for impacting chemicals of concern (NEF Class 1).

These chemicals will not be subject to chemical process safety controls. Controls will be placed on incidental chemical storage, use and handling as necessary and as follows:

1. General occupational chemical safety controls will be in place for protection of facility employees in the storage, handling, and use of all chemicals as required by 29 CFR 1910 (CFR, 2003h)

2. Environmental protection controls required to prevent and/or mitigate environmental damage due to spills and discharges and to control anticipated effluents and waste are detailed in Chapter 9, Environmental Protection, and the NEF Environmental Report.

6.1.2 Chemicals of Concern - Properties

This section summarizes the chemical properties for chemicals of concern and their key byproducts.

6.1.2.1 Uranium Hexafluoride - Chemical Properties

6.1.2.1.1 Physical

Uranium hexafluoride (UF_6) is a chemical compound consisting of one atom of uranium combined with six atoms of fluorine. It is the chemical form of uranium that is used during the uranium enrichment process.

UF_6 can be a solid, liquid, or gas, depending on its temperature and pressure. Multiple phases coexist in equilibrium only under exact combinations of temperature and pressure. These properties are shown in Figure 6.1-1, UF_6 Phase Diagram, which presents the different physical forms of UF_6 as a function of temperature and pressure. The three phases are identified as regions on the diagram separated by lines representing a plot of equilibrium combinations of temperature and pressure. These boundaries all converge at one unique point on the diagram, called the triple point, where all three phases coexist in equilibrium. The triple point of UF_6 is 64°C (147°F) and 152 kPa (22 psia).

Liquid UF_6 is formed only at temperatures and pressures greater than the triple point. Below the triple point, solid UF_6 will change phase directly to UF_6 gas (sublimation) when the temperature is raised and/or the pressure is lowered at continuous points along the solid/gas interface line. This will occur without the UF_6 progressing through a liquid phase. Solid UF_6 is a white, dense, crystalline material that resembles rock salt. Both liquid and gaseous UF_6 are colorless.

Pure UF_6 follows its phase diagram consistently regardless of isotopic content. Impurities in a UF_6 cylinder will cause deviations in the normal phase behavior. The most common gaseous impurities in UF_6 feed are air and hydrogen fluoride (HF) which are generated from the reaction of UF_6 with moisture in the air. Since these light gas impurities have a higher vapor pressure than UF_6, their presence can be detected by measuring the static pressure of cylinders and comparing the results to the UF_6 phase diagram (when the UF_6 temperature is known).

UF_6 exhibits significant expansion when going from solid to liquid phase and continues to expand as the liquid temperature increases. This is illustrated in Figure 6.1-2, Densities of Solid and Liquid UF_6. This figure shows that UF_6 expands roughly 53% going from a solid at 21°C (70°F) to a liquid at 113°C (235°F). Department of Transportation cylinder fill limits are based on UF_6 density at 121°C (250°F) and provide five percent ullage or free volume as a safety factor to prevent hydraulic rupture due to heating.

Other physical properties of UF_6 are presented in Table 6.1-6, Physical Properties of UF_6.

6.1.2.1.2 Reactivity

UF_6 does not react with oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, or dry air, but it does react with water. For this reason, UF_6 is handled in leak tight containers and processing equipment. When UF_6 comes into contact with water, such as the water vapor in the air, the UF_6 and water react, forming hydrogen fluoride (HF) gas and a solid uranium-oxyfluoride compound (UO_2F_2) which is commonly referred to as uranyl fluoride. Additional information on UF_6 reactions with water is provided in Section 6.2.1, Chemistry and Chemical Reactions.

UF_6 is also incompatible with a number of other chemicals including hydrocarbons and aromatics but none of these chemicals are used in or within proximity of UF_6 process systems.

6.1.2.1.3 Toxicological

If UF_6 is released to the atmosphere, the uranium compounds and HF that are formed by reaction with moisture in the air are chemically toxic. Uranium is a heavy metal that, in addition to being radioactive, can have toxic chemical effects (primarily on the kidneys) if it enters the bloodstream by means of ingestion or inhalation. HF is an extremely corrosive gas that can damage the lungs and cause death if inhaled at high enough concentrations. Additional information on the toxicological parameters used for evaluating exposure is provided in Section 6.3, Chemical Hazards Analysis.

6.1.2.1.4 Flammability

UF_6 is not flammable and does not disassociate to flammable constituents under conditions at which it will be handled at the facility.

6.1.2.2 Hydrogen Fluoride - Chemical Properties

Hydrogen fluoride (HF) is not a direct chemical of concern (NEF Class 1), however, it is one of two byproducts of concern that would be developed in the event of most accident scenarios at

the facility. Understanding its properties therefore is important in evaluating chemical process conditions.

6.1.2.2.1 Physical

HF can exist as a gas or as a liquid under pressure (anhydrous hydrogen fluoride) or as an aqueous solution of varying strengths (aqueous hydrofluoric acid). HF vapors are colorless with a pungent odor which is detectable at concentrations above 1 ppm. It is soluble in water with a release of heat.

Releases of anhydrous hydrogen fluoride would typically fume (due to the reaction with water vapor) so that any significant release would be visible at the point of release and in the immediate vicinity.

6.1.2.2.2 Reactivity

In both gaseous and aqueous form, HF is extremely reactive, attacking certain metals, glass and other silicon-containing components, leather and natural rubber. Additional information regarding the corrosion properties and metal attack are provided in Section 6.2.1.3, UF_6 and Construction Materials.

6.1.2.2.3 Toxicological

HF in both gaseous and aqueous forms is strongly corrosive and causes severe burns to the skin, eyes and mucous membranes and severe respiratory irritation.

Inhalation of HF causes an intolerable prickling, burning sensation in the nose and throat, with cough and pain beneath the sternum. Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and ulceration of the gums may also occur. In low concentrations, irritation of the nasal passages, dryness, bleeding from the nose and sinus disorders may result, while continued exposure can lead to ulceration and perforation of the nasal septum. Exposure to high concentrations can cause laryngitis, bronchitis and pulmonary edema which may not become apparent until 12-24 hours after the exposure.

Chronic exposure to excessive quantities of gaseous or particulate fluoride results in nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite and diarrhea or constipation. Fluorosis and other chronic effects may result from significant acute exposures. Systemic fluoride poisoning can cause hypocalcaemia which may lead to cardiac arrhythmias and/or renal failure. Chronic exposure to gaseous or particulate fluoride is not expected at the facility.

Skin exposure to concentrated liquid HF will result in aggressive chemical burns. Burns from exposure to dilute solutions (1-20%) of hydrofluoric acid (aqueous HF) or moderate concentrations of vapor may not be immediately painful or visible. Symptoms of skin exposure include immediate or delayed throbbing, burning pain followed by localized destruction of tissue and blood vessels that may penetrate to the bone. Exposure to liquid forms of HF is not expected at the facility.

Ocular exposure to HF causes a burning sensation, redness and secretion. Splashes of aqueous hydrofluoric acid to the eye rapidly produce conjunctivitis, keratitis and more serious destructive effects but these are not expected at the facility.

6.1.2.2.4 Flammability

HF is not flammable or combustible. HF can react exothermically with water to generate sufficient heat to ignite nearby combustibles. HF in reaction with certain metals can offgas hydrogen which is flammable. Both of these reactions would be more typical for bulk, concentrated HF interaction where large masses (i.e., bulk HF storage) of material are involved. These types of interactions are not expected at the facility.

6.1.2.3 Uranyl Fluoride - Chemical Properties

Uranyl fluoride (UO_2F_2) is not a direct chemical of concern (NEF Class 1), however, it is the second of two byproducts of concern (HF is the other) that would be developed in the event of a UF_6 release at the facility. Understanding its properties therefore is important in evaluating chemical process conditions.

6.1.2.3.1 Physical

UO_2F_2 is an intermediate in the conversion of UF_6 to a uranium oxide or metal form and is a direct product of the reaction of UF_6 with moisture in the air. It exists as a yellow, hygroscopic solid. UO_2F_2 formation and dispersion is governed by the conditions of the atmosphere in which the release is occurring. UF_6 will be continually hydrolyzed in the presence of water vapor. The resulting UF_6/HF cloud will include UO_2F_2 particulate matter within the gaseous stream. As this stream diffuses into larger volumes and additional UF_6 hydrolysis occurs, UO_2F_2 particulate will settle on surfaces as a solid flake-like compound. This deposition will occur within piping/equipment, on lower surfaces within enclosures/rooms, and/or on the ground – wherever the UF_6 hydrolysis reaction is occurring.

6.1.2.3.2 Reactivity

UO_2F_2 is reported to be stable in air to 300°C (570°F). It does not have a melting point because it undergoes thermal decomposition to triuranium octoxide (U_3O_8) above this temperature. When heated to decomposition, UO_2F_2 emits toxic fluoride fumes. UO_2F_2 is hygroscopic and water-soluble and will change in color from brilliant orange to yellow after reacting with water.

6.1.2.3.3 Toxicological

UO_2F_2 is radiologically and chemically toxic due to its uranium content and solubility. Once inhaled, uranyl fluoride is easily absorbed into the bloodstream because of its solubility. If large quantities are inhaled, the uranium in the uranyl complex acts as a heavy metal poison that affects the kidneys. Because of low specific activity values, the radiological toxicity of UF_6 and the UO_2F_2 byproduct are typically of less concern than the chemical toxicity.

6.1.2.3.4 Flammability

UO_2F_2 is not combustible and will not decompose to combustible constituents under conditions at which it will be handled at the facility.

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6.2 CHEMICAL PROCESS INFORMATION

This section characterizes chemical reactions between chemicals of concern and interaction chemicals and other substances as applicable. This section also provides a basic discussion of the chemical processes associated with UF_6 process systems.

6.2.1 Chemistry and Chemical Reactions

Although the separation of isotopes is a physical rather than chemical process, chemical principles play an important role in the design of the facility. The phase behavior of UF_6 is critical to the design of all aspects of the plant. UF_6 has a high affinity for water and will react exothermically with water and water vapor in the air. The products of UF_6 hydrolysis, solid UO_2F_2 and gaseous HF, are both toxic. HF is also corrosive, particularly in the presence of water vapor. Because this chemical reaction results in undesirable by-products, UF_6 is isolated from moisture in the air through proper design of primary containment (i.e., piping, components, and cylinders).

Other chemical reactions occur in systems that decontaminate equipment, remove contaminants from effluent streams, and as part of lubricant recovery or other cleansing processes. Side reactions can include the corrosion and deterioration of construction materials, which influences their specification. These reactions are further described below.

6.2.1.1 UF_6 and Water

Liquid and gaseous UF_6 react rapidly with water and water vapor as does the exposed surface of solid UF_6. UF_6 reacts with water so rapidly that the HF formed is always anhydrous when in the presence of UF_6, significantly reducing its corrosive potential in cylinders, piping, and equipment. The reaction of gaseous UF_6 with water vapor at elevated temperatures is shown in Equation 6.2-1.

$$\underset{\text{(gas)}}{UF_6} + \underset{\text{(vapor)}}{2\,H_2O} \Rightarrow \underset{\text{(solid)}}{UO_2F_2} + \underset{\text{(gas)}}{4HF} + \text{heat} \qquad \text{(Eq. 6.2-1)}$$

At room temperature, depending on the relative humidity of the air, the products of this reaction are UO_2F_2 hydrates and HF- H_2O fog, which will be seen as a white cloud. A typical reaction with excess water is given in Equation 6.2-2.

$$\underset{\text{(gas)}}{UF_6} + \underset{\text{(vapor)}}{(2+4x)H_2O} \Rightarrow \underset{\text{(solid)}}{UO_2F_2 * 2\,H_2O} + \underset{\text{(fog)}}{4HF * x\,H_2O} + \text{heat} \qquad \text{(Eq. 6.2-2)}$$

If, because of extremely low humidity, the HF- H_2O fog is not formed, the finely divided uranyl fluoride (UO_2F_2) causes only a faint haze. UO_2F_2 is a water-soluble, yellow solid whose exact coloring depends on the degree of hydration as well as the particle size.

The heat release for the reaction in Equation 1 is 288.4 kJ/kg (124 BTU/lbm) of UF_6 gas reacted. The heat release is much larger if the UO_2F_2 is hydrated and HF-H_2O fog is formed with a heat release of 2,459 kJ/kg (1057 BTU/lbm) of UF_6 vapor.

These reactions, if occurring in the gaseous phase at ambient or higher temperatures, are very rapid, near instantaneous. Continuing reactions between solid UF_6 and excess water vapor occur more slowly as a uranyl fluoride layer will form on surface of the solid UF_6 which inhibits the rate of chemical reaction.

UF_6 reactions with interaction chemicals are discussed below. These include chemical reactions associated with lubricants and other chemicals directly exposed to UF_6, as well as chemicals used to recover contaminants from used lubricating oils, and capture trace UF_6, uranium compounds, and HF from effluent streams. UF_6 reactions with materials of construction are addressed in Section 6.2.1.3, UF_6 and Construction Material.

6.2.1.2 UF_6 and Interaction Chemicals

The chemistry of UF_6 is significantly affected by its fluorination and oxidation potential. Many of the chemical properties of UF_6 are attributable to the stability of the UO_2++ ion, which permits reactions with water, oxides, and salts containing oxygen-bearing anions such as SO_4--, NO_3--, and CO_3-- without liberation of the O_2 molecule.

The following subsection describes potential chemical interactions between the UF_6 process streams and interaction chemicals.

6.2.1.2.1 PFPE (Fomblin) Oil

The reaction of UF_6 with hydrocarbons is undesirable and can be violent. Gaseous UF_6 reacts with hydrocarbons to form a black residue of uranium-carbon compounds. Hydrocarbons can be explosively oxidized if they are mixed with UF_6 in the liquid phase or at elevated temperatures. It is for this reason that non-fluorinated hydrocarbon lubricants are not utilized in any UF_6 system at the NEF.

UF_6 vacuum pumps are lubricated using PFPE (Perfluorinated Polyether) oil which is commonly referred to by a manufacturer's trade name - Fomblin oil. Fomblin oil is inert, fully fluorinated and does not react with UF_6 under any operating conditions.

Small quantities of uranium compounds and traces of hydrocarbons may be contained in the Fomblin oil used in the UF_6 vacuum pumping systems. The UF_6 degrades in the oil or reacts with trace hydrocarbons to form crystalline compounds – primarily uranyl fluoride (UO_2F_2) and uranium tetrafluoride (UF_4) particles – that gradually thicken the oil and reduce pump capacity.

Recovery of Fomblin oil for reuse in the system is conducted remotely from the UF_6 process systems. The dissolved uranium compounds are removed in a process of precipitation, centrifugation, and filtration. Anhydrous sodium carbonate (Na_2CO_3) is added to contaminated

Fomblin oil. Uranium compounds react to form sodium uranyl carbonate, which precipitates out. A filter removes the precipitate during subsequent centrifugation of the oil.

Trace amounts of hydrocarbons are then removed by adding activated carbon to the Fomblin oil and heating causing absorption of the hydrocarbons. The carbon is in turn removed through a bed of celite.

Failures associated with Fomblin oil and Fomblin oil recovery were evaluated in the Integrated Safety Analysis.

6.2.1.2.2 Chemical Traps - Activated Carbon, Aluminum Oxide, and Sodium Fluoride

Adsorption is the attraction of gas molecules to the surface of an activated solid. There are two classifications of adsorption: physical and chemical. At ordinary temperatures, adsorption is usually caused by molecular forces rather than by the formation of chemical bonds. In this type of adsorption, called physical adsorption, very little heat is evolved. If a chemical reaction takes place between the gas and the solid surface, the process is known as chemisorption. In chemisorption the reaction between surface and gas molecules occurs in a stoichiometric manner, and heat is liberated during the reaction.

Chemisorption is used in the removal of UF_6 and HF from gaseous effluent streams. It is also used to remove oil mist from vacuum pumps operating upstream of gaseous effluent ventilation systems. Adsorbent materials are placed on stationary beds in chemical traps downstream of the various cold traps. These materials capture HF and the trace amounts of UF_6 that escape desublimation during feed purification or during venting of residual UF_6 contained in hoses and/or piping that is bled down before disconnection.

The chemical traps are placed in series downstream of the cold traps in the exhaust streams to the Gaseous Effluent Vent Systems (GEVS) and may include one or more of a series of two different types of chemical traps. The first type of trap contains a charge of activated carbon to capture the small amounts of UF_6 that escape desublimation. Since chemisorption is a pressure sensitive process, HF is not fully adsorbed on carbon at low pressures. This necessitates a second type of trap containing a charge of aluminum oxide (Al_2O_3) to remove HF from the gaseous effluent stream. One or more of a series of these traps is used depending on the process system being served. Additionally, a carbon trap is present on the inlet of the vacuum pumps which discharge to the GEVS to prevent any of the pump oil from migrating back into the UF_6 cold traps.

Chemisorption of UF_6 on activated carbon evolves considerable thermal energy. This is not normally a problem in the chemical traps downstream of the cold traps because very little UF_6 escapes desublimation. If multiple equipment failures and/or operator errors occur, significant quantities of UF_6 could enter the chemical traps containing activated carbon. This could cause significant overheating leading to release. Failures associated with the carbon traps were evaluated in the Integrated Safety Analysis.

Activated carbon cannot be used in the Contingency Dump System because the relatively high UF_6 flow rates during this non-routine operation could lead to severe overheating. A chemical trap containing sodium fluoride (NaF) is installed in the contingency dump flow path to trap UF_6. NaF is used because the heat of UF_6 chemisorption on NaF is significantly lower than the heat of UF_6 chemisorption on activated carbon. Failures associated with the NaF traps were evaluated in the integrated safety analysis.

There are no specific concerns with heat of adsorption of either UF_6 or HF with Al_2O_3. Failures associated with the aluminum oxide traps were evaluated in the Integrated Safety Analysis.

The properties of these chemical adsorbents are provided in Table 6.2-1, Properties of Chemical Adsorbents.

6.2.1.2.3 Decontamination – Citric Acid

Contaminated components (e.g., pumps, valves, piping), once they are removed from the process areas, undergo decontamination. Oily parts are washed in a hot water wash that will remove the bulk of oil including residual uranic compounds. Once the hot water wash is complete, citric acid is used to remove residual uranic fluoride compound layers that are present on the component surfaces. The reaction of the uranium compounds with the citric acid solution produces various uranyl citrate complexes. After citric acid cleansing, the decontaminated component is subject to two additional water wash/rinse cycles. The entire decontamination operation is conducted in small batches on individual components.

Decontamination of sample bottles and valves is also accomplished using citric acid.

Decontamination was evaluated in the Integrated Safety Analysis. Adequate personnel protective features are in place for safely handling decontamination chemicals and byproducts.

6.2.1.2.4 Nitrogen

Gaseous nitrogen is used in the UF_6 systems for purging and filling lines that have been exposed to atmosphere for any of several reasons including: connection and disconnection of cylinders, preparing lines/components for maintenance, providing an air-excluding gaseous inventory for system vacuum pumps, and filling the interstitial space of the liquid sampling autoclave (secondary containment) prior to cylinder liquefaction.

The nitrogen system consists of a liquid nitrogen bulk storage vessel, vaporizer, gaseous nitrogen heater, liquid and gaseous nitrogen distribution lines and instrumentation. Liquid nitrogen is delivered by tanker and stored in the storage vessel.

Nitrogen is not reactive with UF_6 in any plant operational condition. Failures of the nitrogen system were evaluated in the Integrated Safety Analysis.

6.2.1.2.5 Silicone Oil

Silicone oil is used as a heat exchange medium for the heating/chilling of various cold traps. This oil is external to the UF_6 process stream in all cases and is not expected to interact with UF_6. Failures in the heating/chilling systems were evaluated in the Integrated Safety Analysis.

6.2.1.2.6 Halocarbon Refrigerants

Halocarbon refrigerants (including R23 trifluoromethane, R404A fluoromethane blend, and R507 penta/trifluoromethane) are used in individual package chillers that will provide cooling of UF_6 cylinders and/or silicon oil heat exchange media for take-off stations and cold traps. These halocarbons were selected due to good heat transfer properties, because they satisfy

environmental restrictions regarding ozone depletion, and are non-flammable. All halocarbon refrigerants are external to the UF_6 process stream in all cases and are not expected to interact with UF_6. Failures in the heating/chilling systems were evaluated in the Integrated Safety Analysis.

6.2.1.2.7 Plant Chilled Water

Chilled water is circulated in coils as a heat exchange medium for cooling of the liquid sampling autoclave after liquid samples have been drawn. Chilled water is external to the autoclave which is secondary containment for the product cylinder and sampling piping representing three physical barriers between the water and the UF_6 so no interaction is anticipated. Failures in the chilled water distribution system were evaluated in the Integrated Safety Analysis.

6.2.1.2.8 Centrifuge Cooling Water

Centrifuge cooling water is provided from the Centrifuge Cooling Water Distribution System. The function of this system is to provide a supply of deionized cooling water to the cooling coils of the centrifuges. This system provides stringent control over the operating temperature of the centrifuges to enable their efficient operation. Centrifuge cooling water is external to the UF_6 process stream in all cases and is not expected to interact with UF_6. Failures in the centrifuge cooling water distribution system were evaluated in the Integrated Safety Analysis.

6.2.1.3 UF_6 and Construction Materials

The corrosion of metallic plant components and the deterioration of non-metallic sealing materials is avoided by specifying resistant materials of construction and by controlling process fluid purity.

Direct chemical attack by the process fluid on metallic components is the result of chemical reactions. In many cases, the affinity of the process fluid for the metal produces metallic compounds, suggesting that rapid destruction of the metal would take place. This is usually prevented by the formation of a protective layer on the surface of the metal.

Deterioration of non-metallic materials is caused by exposure to process fluids and conditions. Materials used in gaskets, valves, flexible hoses, and other sealants must be sufficiently inert to have a useful service life.

UF_6 and some of its reaction products are potentially corrosive substances, particularly HF. UF_6 is a fluorinating agent that reacts with most metals. The reaction between UF_6 and metals such as nickel, copper, and aluminum produces a protective fluoride film over the metal that inhibits further reaction. These materials are therefore relatively inert to UF_6 corrosion after passivation and are suitable for UF_6 service. Aluminum is used as piping material for UF_6 systems because it is especially resistant to corrosion in the presence of UF_6. Carbon steels and stainless steels can be attacked by UF_6 at elevated temperatures but are not significantly affected by the presence of UF_6 at the operating temperatures for the facility.

Light gas impurities such as HF and air are removed from UF_6 during the purification process. Although HF is a highly corrosive substance when in solution with water as aqueous hydrofluoric acid, it contributes very little to metal corrosion when in the presence of UF_6. This is

due to the fact that UF_6 reacts with water so rapidly that HF remains anhydrous when in the presence of UF_6.

Corrosion rates of certain metals in contact with UF_6 are presented in Table 6.2-2, UF_6 Corrosion Rates, for two different temperatures. This data was provided in the original Safety Analysis Report for the Claiborne Enrichment Center (LES, 1993).

Resistant metal such as stainless steel are used in valve bellows and flex hoses. Aluminum piping is bent to minimize the use of fittings. Connections are welded to minimize the use of flanges and gaskets. As a standard practice, the use of sealant materials is minimized to reduce the number of potential leak paths.

Non-metallic materials are required to seal connections in UF_6 systems to facilitate valve and instrument replacement as well as cylinder connections. They are also used in valve packing and seating applications. All gasketing and packing material used at the facility will be confirmed as appropriate for UF_6 services. Typical materials that are resistant to UF_6 through the range of plant operating conditions include butyl rubber, Viton, and Kel-F.

The materials used to contain UF_6 are provided in Table 6.2-3, Materials of Construction for UF_6 Systems. The cylinders to be used at the facility are standard Department of Transportation approved containers for the transport and storage of UF_6, designed and fabricated in accordance with ANSI N14.1 (ANSI, applicable version). The nominal and minimum (for continued service) wall thickness for cylinders listed in Table 6.2-3, are taken from this standard.

The remaining system materials are relatively inert in the presence of UF_6 and the corrosion rates given in Table 6.2-2, indicate that these materials are acceptable for UF_6 service over the life of the plant.

As shown in Table 6.2-3, the cylinders used to store and transport UF_6 are made of carbon steel. Uranium Byproduct Cylinders (UBCs) are stored outside in open air where they are exposed to the elements. Atmospheric corrosion is determined by the exposure to moisture (e.g., rain, snow, atmospheric humidity) and the impurities in the air (such as sulfur). The corrosion rate on the outside surfaces of the carbon steel cylinders therefore varies accordingly with these conditions. Carbon steel storage cylinders are painted to provide a corrosion barrier to external elements.

External corrosion can occur on the outside cylinder surface and at interface points such as the contact point with the resting blocks and in skirt depressions (at the cylinder ends). According to a paper entitled Monitoring of Corrosion in ORGDP Cylinder Yards (DOE, 1988), the average corrosion rate experienced by UBCs is less than 0.051 mm/yr (2 mils/yr). This corrosion rate is almost exclusively due to exterior rust on the carbon steel. Another report – Prediction of External Corrosion for Steel Cylinders – 2001 Report (ORNL, 2001) – sampled exterior steel cylinders (30A) at Oak Ridge National Laboratories that had been subject to intermittent contact with the ground and found to have average corrosion rates of approximately 0.041 mm/yr (1.6 mils/yr). These values indicate that the expected service life would be greater than 50 years. These rates are conservative based on the UBC storage arrangement at the NEF. Cylinders subject to weather conditions (i.e., UBCs) will be periodically inspected to assess corrosion and corrosion rate.

Emergency procedures address the preplanned actions of operators and other plant personnel in the event of an emergency.

A more detailed description of the procedural development and management program can be found in Section 11.4, Procedures Development and Implementation.

6.4.7 Chemical Safety Audits

Audits are conducted to determine that plant operations are performed in compliance with regulatory requirements, license conditions, and written procedures. As a minimum, they assess activities related to radiation protection, criticality safety control, hazardous chemical safety, fire protection, and environmental protection.

Audits are performed in accordance with a written plan, which identifies and schedules audits to be performed. Audit team members shall not have direct responsibility for the function and area being audited. Team members have technical expertise or experience in the area being audited and are indoctrinated in audit techniques. Audits are conducted on an annual basis on select functions and areas as defined above. The chemical process safety functions and areas will be audited at least triennially.

Qualified staff personnel that are not directly responsible for production activities are utilized to perform routine surveillances/assessments. Deficiencies noted during the inspection requiring corrective action are forwarded to the manager of the applicable area or function for action. Future surveillances/assessments include a review to evaluate if corrective actions have been effective.

A more detailed description of the audit program can be found in Section 11.5, Audits and Assessments.

6.4.8 Emergency Planning

The NEF has a facility emergency plan and program which includes response to mitigate the potential impact of any process chemical release including requirements for notification and reporting of accidental chemical releases.

The LES fire brigade/emergency response team is outfitted, equipped, and trained to provide hazardous material response and mitigation commensurate with the requirements of 29 CFR 1910.120, Hazardous waste operations and emergency response (CFR, 2004). This includes a technician level qualified entry and backup team with supporting emergency medical function, incident command, and a safety officer. The safety officer has the additional responsibility to monitor response activities to ensure that criticality safety is maintained.

The City of Hobbs, NM Fire Department is the nearest offsite response agency who can supplement LES with additional Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) response teams. As a result of a baseline needs assessment conducted on offsite response, LES has committed to assist the local offsite fire agency, Eunice Fire and Rescue, in obtaining the equipment and training to also provide a HAZWOPER compliant response team.

Additional information on emergency response can be found in SAR Section 7.5.2, Fire Emergency Response, and in the NEF Emergency Plan.