



CMD 26-M33 - CNSC Staff Status Update to the Commission

CNSC staff update on its oversight of Canadian Nuclear Laboratories corrective actions regarding release of contaminated material from Chalk River Laboratories to the Deep River Sewage Landfill (event ERM-25-3644)

Classification	Unclassified
Type of CMD	Status Update
CMD Number	26-M33
Reference CMD(s)	25-M36A, Section 25-M39
Public meeting date	September 2, 2026
Summary	CMD 26-M33 provides a status update to the Commission on CNSC staff's oversight of Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL's) corrective actions, including whether CNL's measures have adequately addressed any common causes, regarding the unintentional release of contaminated material from the Chalk River Laboratories (CRL) to the Deep River sewage landfill. As per "Minutes of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) Meeting December 12, 2025", paragraph 35, CNSC staff were directed by the Commission to provide an update on its oversight of CNL's corrective actions.
Actions required	This CMD is to provide an update to the Commission only.



CMD 26-M33

**CNSC Staff update on its oversight of CNL's corrective actions regarding release
of contaminated material from Chalk River Laboratories to the Deep River
Sewage Landfill (event ERM-25-3644)**

Signed by:

2026-08-12

X Claire Pike

Signed by: Pike, Claire

Claire Pike on behalf of Karen Owen-Whitred
Director General, Directorate of Nuclear Cycle and Facilities Regulations



CNSC Staff update on its oversight of CNL's corrective actions regarding release of contaminated material from Chalk River Laboratories to the Deep River Sewage Landfill (Event ERM-25-3644)

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission



MEMORANDUM

NOTE DE SERVICE

To Candace Salmon
A Commission Registrar / Registrare de la
Commission

CMD#26-M33

Fully releasable ATIP : Yes

2026-08-12

From X Claire Pike
De

Claire Pike on behalf of Karen Oqwn-Whitred
Director General, DNCFR
Signed by: Pike, Claire

Subject: CNSC Staff update on its oversight of CNL's corrective actions regarding release of contaminated material from Chalk River Laboratories to the Deep River Landfill (Event ERM-25-3644)

1.0 Purpose

As requested in the [Minutes of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission \(CNSC\) Meeting December 12, 2025](#), the purpose of this Commission Member Document (CMD) is to provide a status update on Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) staff regulatory oversight of Canadian Nuclear Laboratories' (CNL) corrective and remedial actions associated with the unintentional release of contaminated material from the Chalk River Laboratories (CRL) site to the Deep River sewage landfill (event ERM-25-3644).

2.0 Background

On October 3, 2025, CNL submitted the unplanned preliminary event report informing the CNSC that approximately 7m³ of contaminated sewage sludge was removed from the CRL site and unintentionally dispositioned to the Deep River Sewage Landfill between September 22-24, 2025.

Once this issue was discovered, CNL took immediate actions by isolating the area, restricting access and securing the material until it could be recovered.



A CNSC inspector observed CNL's response and found that CNL had taken all reasonable steps to protect the environment and people's health and safety. CNSC staff also noted that CNL promptly informed the towns of Deep River and Laurentian Hills and engaged with Indigenous Nations.

On October 5, 2025, CNL advised CNSC staff that all sewage sludge resulting from the release, along with any affected soils, had been recovered from the landfill. The impacted area was also remediated and restored.

CNL submitted its full event report to CNSC staff on October 23, 2025.

On December 12, 2025, CNSC staff and CNL provided verbal updates to the Commission about the event. CNSC staff explained what happened, described their oversight activities, and confirmed the event did not pose a risk to the public or the environment. CNL outlined the actions taken to respond to the event, immediate corrective actions, and ongoing root cause analysis. The Commission directed CNL to provide an update on the root cause of the off-site contamination. The Commission also requested that CNSC staff provide an update on its oversight of CNL's corrective actions, including whether CNL's measures have adequately addressed any common causes (Paragraph 25 of [Minutes of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission \(CNSC\) Meeting December 12, 2025](#)).

3.0 CNSC Staff Regulatory Oversight

On December 17, 2025, CNL submitted its revised full event report. The report included corrective actions, derived from the root cause analysis (RCA), with associated due dates and closure criteria.

As part of its regulatory oversight activities, CNSC staff:

- Reviewed the revised full event report, the RCA, and corrective action plans to verify that the event was appropriately reported, was reported within the applicable timeframe, and that all required information was provided in accordance with regulatory requirements
- Assessed CNL's full event report and RCA, including the identification of direct, contributing, and organizational causes, to evaluate whether the proposed corrective actions addressed the underlying causes of the event and were commensurate with the associated risks
- Assessed additional information requested regarding oversight roles and responsibilities, decision making process, and procedural controls used for waste management, characterization and clearance activities.

CNSC staff verified that CNL has implemented appropriate corrective actions, except for the effectiveness review, to address the root causes of the event. Based on the review, CNSC staff requested that CNL:



- Confirm the completion and effective implementation of all corrective and remedial actions arising from RCA (provided by CNL on July 3, 2026)
- Provide the copies of any revised or new documents and procedures resulting from the implementation of these actions (provided by CNL on July 3, 2026)
- Submit the results of the effectiveness review (February 25, 2027)

CNSC staff will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the corrective actions and ensure the identified issues are adequately addressed to prevent recurrence.

4.0 Status of Corrective Actions

On July 3, 2026, CNL submitted an update on the status of corrective and remedial actions identified in the RCA. CNL reported that all the planned actions have been completed, except for the effectiveness review, which is on track to be completed by November 25, 2026.

CNSC staff are satisfied with the progress CNL has made to date. Upon completion of the effectiveness review, CNSC staff will assess the results to determine whether the corrective actions continue to achieve their intended results and are demonstrating sustained long-term effectiveness.

5.0 Conclusion

CNSC staff determined that the corrective and remedial actions taken by CNL were appropriate to address the root causes of the contaminated sewage release event.

This event did not have any adverse impacts on the environment or public.

CNSC staff will maintain regulatory oversight until the remaining corrective action; effectiveness review is completed by CNL.