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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Institute of Standards and Technology**  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899-0001

JUN 12 2017

John Greenewald, Jr.

[REDACTED]  
[john@greenewald.com](mailto:john@greenewald.com)

Dear Mr. Greenewald:

This letter serves as the final response to your April 9, 2017 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request (FOIA Log #DOC-NIST-2017-000984) to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) for: **“All documents released under FOIA Case NIST-2015-001721, which I believe, include emails that contain the keyword ‘236’”.**

NIST has completed the actual search for responsive records and enclosed are 78 (seventy-eight) documents consisting of 197 (one hundred and ninety-seven) pages that are being released in their entirety.

Also enclosed are 4 (four) documents consisting of 26 (twenty-six) pages that are being released with redactions pursuant to FOIA Exemption (b)(6) of the FOIA (5 U.S.C. Section 552(b)(6)) which exempts from disclosure “personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.”

Also enclosed are 6 (six) documents consisting of 12 (twelve) pages containing material that is non-responsive to your request. The portions of the documents that are non-responsive to your request have been redacted and are marked “Non-Responsive.”

In addition, 48 (forty-eight) documents consisting of 181 (one hundred eighty-one) pages are being withheld in their entirety pursuant to FOIA Exemption (b)(5) of the FOIA (5 U.S.C. Section 552(b)(5)) which permits NIST to withhold documents that are reflective of the deliberative process. Because the records are “predecisional and antecedent to the adoption of an agency policy,” and “a direct part of the deliberative process in that it makes recommendations or expresses opinions on legal or policy matters,” they are properly withholdable under the FOIA.

If you have questions or concerns or would like to discuss any aspect of your request, you may contact either the analyst who processed your request, Elizabeth Reinhart, Management Analyst at 301-975-8707, or me, the FOIA Public Liaison/Freedom of Information Act Officer, at 301-975-4054. We may also be reached at [foia@nist.gov](mailto:foia@nist.gov). In addition, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at

[ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov); telephone at 202741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448, or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

You have the right to appeal this partial denial of the FOIA request. An appeal must be received within 90 calendar days of the date of this response letter to:

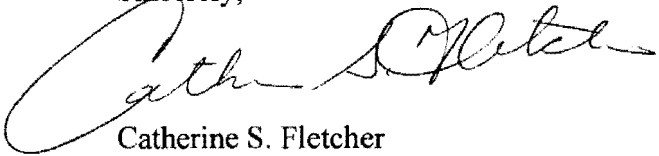
Assistant General Counsel for Litigation, Employment, and Oversight Office  
U.S. Department of Commerce, Room 5875  
14<sup>th</sup> and Constitution Avenue N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Your appeal may also be sent by e-mail to [FOIAAppeals@doc.gov](mailto:FOIAAppeals@doc.gov), by facsimile (fax) to 202-482-2552, or by FOIAonline, if you have an account in FOIAonline, at <https://foiaonline.regulations.gov/foia/action/public/home#>. The appeal must include a copy of the original request, this response to the request and a statement of the reason why the withheld records should be made available and why denial of the records was in error. The submission (including e-mail, fax, and FOIAonline submissions) is not complete without the required attachments. The appeal letter, the envelope, the e-mail subject line, and the fax cover sheet should be clearly marked "Freedom of Information Act Appeal."

The e-mail, fax machine, FOIAonline, and Office are monitored only on working days during normal business hours (8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday). FOIA appeals posted to the e-mail box, fax machine, FOIAonline, or Office after normal business hours will be deemed received on the next normal business day. If the 90<sup>th</sup> calendar day for submitting an appeal falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal public holiday, an appeal received by 5:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, the next business day will be deemed timely. If the 90<sup>th</sup> calendar day for submitting an appeal falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal public holiday, an appeal received by 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time, the next business day will be deemed timely.

It was previously determined that you were in the "media/educational" requester category for which chargeable services include duplication of responsive documents excluding the first 100 pages of duplication. The actual duplication costs were under the chargeable threshold; thus, the documents are being provided at no cost.

Sincerely,



Catherine S. Fletcher  
Freedom of Information Act Officer

Enclosures

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** gstaff@nist.gov on behalf of Spurrier, Mark G <mark.spurrier@nist.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 19, 2015 10:59 AM  
**To:** GSTAFF  
**Subject:** Minor explosion at Building 236

At about 7:30 p.m., last night, there was a small explosion at Building 236. Emergency responders from NIST and Montgomery County responded to the incident. One individual received burns and was transported to the hospital for evaluation.

The facility remains closed at this time pending completion of the investigation but it is anticipated that the building will be open for use by tomorrow morning. A follow-up email will be sent later today confirming the operating status of the building for Monday morning.

Please contact Mark Spurrier, Chief, Emergency Services Division, at 301-975-2060, if you have questions regarding access to the building.

Stephen Salber  
Chief Facilities Management Officer  
National Institute of Standards and Technology

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** gstaff@nist.gov on behalf of Spurrier, Mark G <mark.spurrier@nist.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 19, 2015 6:42 PM  
**To:** GSTAFF  
**Subject:** Building 236 Update.

With the exception of room 129, Building 236 will be open on Monday, July 20, 2015.

Room 129 will remain closed at this time. Additional information will be provided later this week on the projected date that room 129 will be returned to normal operations.

Please contact Mark Spurrier, Chief, Emergency Services Division, at 301-975-2660, if you have questions regarding access to this room.

Stephen Salber  
Chief Facilities Management Officer  
National Institute of Standards and Technology

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 1:54 PM  
**To:** Wixon, Henry N.; Boehm, Jason; Kayser, Richard F.; Locascio, Laurie E.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Salber, Stephen S.; Saunders, Mary H.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Subject:** RE: Short Turnaround: Please Review by 1:30

Thanks for everyone's help with this. We will be issuing at 2 p.m. At some point in the future we should send a note to both Gaithersburg and Boulder.

To NIST Gaithersburg staff:

As a follow up to the email sent over the weekend about the explosion in Bldg. 236 on Saturday evening, the NIST Office of Safety, Health, and Environment has conducted a review of the laboratory where the incident occurred and found it to be free of hazardous conditions. The laboratory remains closed at this time, but Bldg. 236 is otherwise open for normal operations.

A member of NIST's security team was injured in the explosion, was taken to a local trauma center for treatment, and has since been released.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department is under way. We will keep you informed as we are able to share more.

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 2:10 PM  
**To:** Schulte, Beneva  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** FW: Internal staff note

Beneva: Here's what we plan to share with our staff shortly. Thanks, Gail

To NIST Gaithersburg staff:

As a follow up to the email sent over the weekend about the explosion in Bldg. 236 on Saturday evening, the NIST Office of Safety, Health, and Environment has conducted a review of the laboratory where the incident occurred and found it to be free of hazardous conditions. The laboratory remains closed at this time, but Bldg. 236 is otherwise open for normal operations.

A member of NIST's security team was injured in the explosion, was taken to a local trauma center for treatment, and has since been released.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department is under way. We will keep you informed as we are able to share more.

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Ost, Laura M.  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 2:10 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Burrus, James N.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Subject:** RE: Gaithersburg Internal staff note

Thanks. Does Kent know at least?

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 12:09 PM  
**To:** Ost, Laura M.; Burrus, James N.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Subject:** Gaithersburg Internal staff note

In case you get questions about this from Boulder staff, we're sharing this for now with Gaithersburg staff but plan to share more with Boulder staff as well ideally when we have more information from Montgomery Country Police.

To NIST Gaithersburg staff:

As a follow up to the email sent over the weekend about the explosion in Bldg. 236 on Saturday evening, the NIST Office of Safety, Health, and Environment has conducted a review of the laboratory where the incident occurred and found it to be free of hazardous conditions. The laboratory remains closed at this time, but Bldg. 236 is otherwise open for normal operations.

A member of NIST's security team was injured in the explosion, was taken to a local trauma center for treatment, and has since been released.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department is under way. We will keep you informed as we are able to share more.



## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** gstaff@nist.gov on behalf of NIST Announcer <announce@nist.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 2:17 PM  
**To:** GSTAFF  
**Subject:** Further Update on Building 236

As a follow up to the email sent over the weekend about the explosion in Bldg. 236 on Saturday evening, the NIST Office of Safety, Health, and Environment has conducted a review of the laboratory where the incident occurred and found it to be free of hazardous conditions. The laboratory remains closed at this time, but Bldg. 236 is otherwise open for normal operations.

A member of NIST's security team was injured in the explosion, was taken to a local trauma center for treatment, and has since been released.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department is under way. We will keep you informed as we are able to share more.

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 2:45 PM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** FW: Short Turnaround: Please Review by 1:30

FYI also.

**From:** Kayser, Richard F.  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 2:39 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Cc:** Saunders, Mary H.; Capriotti, Jason; Wong, Wing; Good, Jeffrey  
**Subject:** RE: Short Turnaround: Please Review by 1:30

Gail –

OSHE's folks did scan inside and outside the building (outside 129). They also scanned sinks, toilets, and a shower. No detects anywhere.

Bear in mind also that Montgomery County HAZMAT cleared the building after doing its thing.

I've got to run to the airport.

Thanks.

Rich

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 1:54 PM  
**To:** Wixon, Henry N.; Boehm, Jason; Kayser, Richard F.; Locascio, Laurie E.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Salber, Stephen S.; Saunders, Mary H.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Subject:** RE: Short Turnaround: Please Review by 1:30

Thanks for everyone's help with this. We will be issuing at 2 p.m. At some point in the future we should send a note to both Gaithersburg and Boulder.

To NIST Gaithersburg staff:

As a follow up to the email sent over the weekend about the explosion in Bldg. 236 on Saturday evening, the NIST Office of Safety, Health, and Environment has conducted a review of the laboratory where the incident occurred and found it to be free of hazardous conditions. The laboratory remains closed at this time, but Bldg. 236 is otherwise open for normal operations.

A member of NIST's security team was injured in the explosion, was taken to a local trauma center for treatment, and has since been released.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department is under way. We will keep you informed as we are able to share more.

## Reinhart, Liz (Fed)

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**From:** Kayser, Richard F. (Fed)  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 18, 2017 6:03 PM  
**To:** Kayser, Richard F. (Fed)  
**Subject:** Building 236: Room 129 Investigation - OSHE GSHED Exposure Assessment

**Importance:** High

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**From:** Capriotti, Jason  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 4:35 PM  
**To:** Kayser, Richard F.; Porter, Gail; Saunders, Mary H.; Spurrier, Mark G; Shahan, Stephen; Mathews IV, Robert E.; Young, Gary S.; Good, Jeffrey; Wong, Wing; Blackmon, James Michael  
**Cc:** Capriotti, Jason  
**Subject:** Building 236: Room 129 Investigation - OSHE GSHED Exposure Assessment  
**Importance:** High

### Background:

On July 20, 2015, OSHE GSHED conducted an exposure assessment in Building 236, Room 129 where an explosion occurred on July 18, 2015.

### General Observations:

- Room 129 appears to be unused and unoccupied.
- No evidence of odors related to the explosion in the following areas: Building 236 dumpster, Building 236 Men's restroom, and trash container outside Building 318.
- Proper donning of all appropriate PPE was conducted by OSHE GSHED; however, after instrumentation confirmed no airborne hazards, OSHE GSHED removed respiratory protection (RP). After doffing RP, no odors, such as ammonia or VOCs, were detected in Building 236, Room 129 by way of human olfactory.
- Hood where explosion occurred is still in operation and maintaining a face velocity of approximately 90 fpm with middle sash doors open.
- OSHE EMG (Mike Blackmon) sampled the water in the laboratory sink trap and tested it with a pH meter and determined that the water has a pH of approximately 7.8 (neutral to slight alkaline). [NOTE: The water emitted a slight petroleum-based odor.]
- Immediate area near hood has been potentially impacted *structurally* by the explosion. In particular, laboratory cabinet door is bent and will not close, sliding doors cannot move within track (tracking has possibly been bent from explosion), and several ceiling tiles are displaced and unsecure in the area above the fume hood.

### Results:

Air samples were taken for ammonia, xylene, isopropanol, and general volatile organic compounds (VOCs). In addition, surface samples of "white powder" inside hood was taken and analyzed. In addition, the "white powder" was also tested with pH paper and determined to be "very" alkaline. The results are as follows:

### OSHE GSHED Exposure Assessment – 7/20/15

<u>Chemical(s)</u>	<u>Instrument</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Result</u>
Ammonia	Drager CMS	Building 236, Room 129	Non-detect
Xylene	Drager CMS	Building 236, Room 129	Non-detect
Isopropanol	Drager CMS	Building 236, Room 129	Non-detect

White powder	Thermo-Sci Raman Thermo-Sci FTi*	Building 236, Room 129	Raman = Inconclusive FTi= residual amount of sodium nitrate and calcium carbonate
General VOCs	Thermo-Sci Photoionization Detector	Building 236, Room 129, Building 236, Men's restroom, and trash containers related to explosion	Extremely low and remain relative to ambient levels taken outdoors.

FTi\* =Fourier Transform Infrared

**Conclusion:**

Building 236, Room 129 can be occupied by an OFPM (or OFPM contracted) cleaning crew **trained** in the hazards specific to the cause of this explosion. The scope of the cleaning crew should be to clean the surfaces, including but not limited to the, laboratory bench top, fume hood work surfaces (includes vertical surfaces inside laboratory fume hood) and floor. At a minimum, vacuuming must be conducted using a HEPA filtered vacuum cleaner, and wet methods using properly proportioned cleaning solvents specific to cleaning chemicals associated with this type of explosion. Proper personal protective equipment (PPE) must be used during cleaning.

**Recommendations:**

- Have OFPM inspect the hood, hood components, hood duct, fan to ensure it remains satisfactory for use, or, if the laboratory is not in use, have MML tag the hood out of service.
- Have a structural engineer/structural expert evaluate the room since it experienced an explosion.
- Contact OSHE GSSED to conduct an evaluation of Building 236, Room 129 once it has been cleaned. At that time, OSHE GSSED will determine if Room 129 has been thoroughly cleaned and if Room 129 can be occupied by NIST research staff.

Please do not hesitate to contact OSHE GSSED if you need additional assistance.

Best-  
Jason

**Jason T. Capriotti, CIH, CSP**  
Industrial Hygienist

National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office of Safety Health & Environment  
Building 223, Room A315  
Gaithersburg, MD 20899

Office: (301) 975-4984  
iPhone: (240) 477-3467  
Fax: (301) 975-2197  
Email: [Jason.Capriotti@nist.gov](mailto:Jason.Capriotti@nist.gov)



## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** allstaff@nist.gov on behalf of NIST Announcer <announce@nist.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 6:19 PM  
**To:** ALLSTAFF  
**Subject:** Media Reports on Bldg. 236 Explosion

Over the weekend and today, NIST Gaithersburg employees have received emails about an explosion that occurred in Building 236. One employee was injured in that explosion, was taken to a trauma center for treatment, and subsequently released. The NIST Office of Safety, Health, and Environment has conducted a review of the laboratory where the incident occurred and found it to be free of hazardous conditions. The laboratory remains closed at this time, but Bldg. 236 is otherwise open for normal operations.

There have now been media reports alleging that the explosion was related to production of the illegal drug methamphetamine.

A spokesman from the Montgomery County Police Department was quoted in a newscast saying, "We're still in the middle of this investigation. We are looking at the possibility that this was some sort of chemical reaction due to the manufacture of drugs."

NIST is fully cooperating with Montgomery County Police in this investigation. We will continue to keep you informed as the investigation proceeds.

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 10:36 PM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Fwd: Inquiry about Incident at NIST

See response below. Also spoke to him briefly by phone.

Gail Porter  
301 975 3392 work  
301 367 7385 cell

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>  
**Date:** July 20, 2015 at 10:35:42 PM EDT  
**To:** "[martin.weil@washpost.com](mailto:martin.weil@washpost.com)" <[martin.weil@washpost.com](mailto:martin.weil@washpost.com)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Inquiry about Incident at NIST

Mr. Weil:

Laura Ost forwarded your inquiry to me. I'm the director of Public Affairs for NIST.

These are the details I can confirm at this time.

At about 7:30 pm Saturday July 18 a small explosion occurred on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. And investigation by Montgomery County Police Department is under way.

For specifics on the status of investigation please contact Captain Paul Starks with the Montgomery County Police Department.

I can forward his contact information in a separate note if you need it.

Thanks,  
Gail

Gail Porter

Director

Public Affairs Office

National Institute of Standards and Technology

(301) 975-3392 office

(301) 367-7385 cell

[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)

Follow NIST on





## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:18 PM  
**To:** Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Saunders, Mary H.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.; Boehm, Jason  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Subject:** Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236  
**Attachments:** Bldg 236\_July 2015\_DRAFT\_5.docx

**Importance:** High

Below and attached are revised Qs and As from Jennifer and I that hopefully respond to Rich and Henry's comments. I shortened the draft by addressing all questions about the events of the incident and any possible criminal activity in the last question and answer. I also added a questions and answer about how NIST would mitigate such events in the future.

Please let me know by 9 a.m. tomorrow if you have any corrections or comments. I still need to share them with DOC Public Affairs. Thanks.

### **Qs and As (Responsive Only)**

#### **July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department (MDPD) is underway. The Drug Enforcement Administration is jointly working with MCPD on the investigation. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

#### **Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

**A1.** The laboratory room where the explosion occurred has previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

#### **Q2. Was the explosion caused by a research project or equipment malfunction?**

**A2.** The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts occurring in the specific laboratory room when this explosion occurred. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway that is expected to determine the cause of the explosion.

#### **Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

**A3.** The affected lab room and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No hazardous materials were detected.

**Q4. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

A4. The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery Police Department and Fire and Rescue Service. The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently made the decision to investigate. NIST agrees with that decision and fully supports their efforts. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the county to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q5. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

A5. On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

The explosion on Saturday, July 18, was not related to the earlier situation.

**Q6. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

A6. The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the Drug Enforcement Agency. The lab has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q7. Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

A7. No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q8. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A8. NIST police officers have access to most rooms at NIST as part of their responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property.

**Q9. What security procedures are in place to make sure that laboratories are only used in approved ways?**

A9. The great majority of NIST laboratory spaces are in active use daily. NIST holds regular safety inspections and requires hazard reviews for every approved activity in every laboratory. Individual laboratories have either key or digital keypad locks and each has staff members responsible for keeping it in compliance with safety and security policies.

**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. Yes.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A11. The safety of the NIST Center of Neutron Research was not reduced. The officer's responsibilities did not include the building that houses the NIST Center for Neutron Research.

**Q12. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

A24. The NIST Police Services group has been authorized by statute for more than 15 years and operates under a delegation of authority from the Department of Homeland Security.

**Q13. Who's in charge of the investigation?**

A25. The Montgomery County Police Department is conducting the investigation, working jointly with the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security staffing, processes and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

In addition, NIST will conduct a review with its research managers to ensure that current protocols are being uniformly implemented to ensure appropriate use and security of laboratory spaces.

**If charges are filed and the employee is named.**

**Q15. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A13. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q.16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

Q16. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:22 AM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** FW: Wash Post Coverage

FYI. Can you also share with Rhongey. Don't even know how to spell her name yet. Thanks.

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:20 AM  
**To:** bschulte@doc.gov; Hock, Jim  
**Subject:** Wash Post Coverage

Two pieces on the Post website. One by a staffer and one from AP below and linked. Metro reporter Dan Morse also called me this a.m.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/police-ask-was-anyone-trying-to-make-drugs-at-a-federal-lab-in-gaithersburg/2015/07/20/daf781ea-2f4b-11e5-8353-1215475949f4\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/police-ask-was-anyone-trying-to-make-drugs-at-a-federal-lab-in-gaithersburg/2015/07/20/daf781ea-2f4b-11e5-8353-1215475949f4_story.html)

### Public Safety

Police ask: Was anyone trying to make drugs at a federal lab in Gaithersburg?

By [Martin Weil](#) | [Washington Post](#)

One person was injured Saturday night in an explosion at a federal laboratory in Gaithersburg, Md., and police are trying to find out whether it was ignited by an effort to make drugs.

“A relatively small explosion” was reported about 7 p.m. Saturday in a lab in Building 236 on the campus of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, said Gail Porter, a NIST spokeswoman.

A security officer was treated and released from a hospital after suffering injuries that were not life threatening, Porter said.

“We are looking at the possibility that this was some sort of chemical reaction due to the manufacturing of drugs,” said Capt. Paul Starks, the spokesman for the Montgomery County police.

He said no one has been charged and the investigation is continuing.

NIST, founded in 1901, is one of the nation's major physical science laboratories.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/possible-drug-related-explosion-investigated-at-federal-lab/2015/07/21/169b72ce-2f97-11e5-a879-213078d03dd3\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/possible-drug-related-explosion-investigated-at-federal-lab/2015/07/21/169b72ce-2f97-11e5-a879-213078d03dd3_story.html)

### **Possible drug-related explosion investigated at federal lab**

By Associated Press

GAITHERSBURG, Md. — Police are trying to determine whether an explosion inside a Maryland federal laboratory that injured one person was the result of an effort to make drugs.

National Institute of Standards and Technology spokeswoman Gail Porter says the explosion was reported Saturday night at one of the laboratories in Gaithersburg.

Porter says a security officer was treated and released from a hospital after suffering injuries that were not life threatening.

Montgomery County police spokesman Capt. Paul Starks says the chemical reaction might have been caused by the manufacturing of drugs.

Starks says no one has been charged in connection with the incident.

NIST, founded in 1901, is one of the nation's major physical science laboratories.

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## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 4:36 PM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** FW: KPMG call regarding media reports

**From:** Jenkins, George  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 3:52 PM  
**To:** Kimball, Kevin A.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Boehm, Jason; Porter, Gail  
**Subject:** RE: KPMG call regarding media reports

At this point it is merely informational. They are getting updates on this via news reports and to them they do not know the magnitude of the issue...

**From:** Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 3:49 PM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Boehm, Jason; Porter, Gail  
**Cc:** Jenkins, George  
**Subject:** RE: KPMG call regarding media reports

Can't see how this rises to an audit risk. Don't remember briefing the auditors after plutonium and that was 1000 times more of a risk.

----- Original Message -----

**From:** "May, Willie E. Dr." <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, July 21, 2015 8:57 PM +0200  
**To:** "Boehm, Jason" <[jason.boehm@nist.gov](mailto:jason.boehm@nist.gov)>, "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>, "Kimball, Kevin A." <[kevin.kimball@nist.gov](mailto:kevin.kimball@nist.gov)>  
**CC:** "Jenkins, George" <[george.jenkins@nist.gov](mailto:george.jenkins@nist.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: KPMG call regarding media reports

Suggest both. First sending text we agree on and offer a follow-up phone call if need be

----- Original Message -----

**From:** "Boehm, Jason" <[jason.boehm@nist.gov](mailto:jason.boehm@nist.gov)>  
**Date:** Tue, July 21, 2015 2:53 PM -0400  
**To:** "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>, "Kimball, Kevin A." <[kevin.kimball@nist.gov](mailto:kevin.kimball@nist.gov)>  
**CC:** "May, Willie E. Dr." <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)>, "Jenkins, George" <[george.jenkins@nist.gov](mailto:george.jenkins@nist.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: KPMG call regarding media reports

I'm not familiar with the remit of the auditors. We could definitely send them the internal email, but perhaps we should offer them a briefing as we have done with the Hill.

Jason

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 2:51 PM  
**To:** Saunders, Mary H.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Boehm, Jason

**Cc:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Jenkins, George  
**Subject:** RE: KPMG call regarding media reports

Agree that the internal employee email text may be the most appropriate quick response to make.

Kevin or Jason: Do you agree?

Here's the internal email text:

Over the weekend and today, NIST Gaithersburg employees have received emails about an explosion that occurred in Building 236. One employee was injured in that explosion, was taken to a trauma center for treatment, and subsequently released. The NIST Office of Safety, Health, and Environment has conducted a review of the laboratory where the incident occurred and found it to be free of hazardous conditions. The laboratory remains closed at this time, but Bldg. 236 is otherwise open for normal operations.

There have now been media reports alleging that the explosion was related to production of the illegal drug methamphetamine.

A spokesman from the Montgomery County Police Department was quoted in a newscast saying, "We're still in the middle of this investigation. We are looking at the possibility that this was some sort of chemical reaction due to the manufacture of drugs."

NIST is fully cooperating with Montgomery County Police in this investigation. We will continue to keep you informed as the investigation proceeds.

Thanks,  
Gail

Gail Porter  
Director  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
(301) 975-3392 office  
(301) 367-7385 cell  
[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)  
Follow NIST on



**From:** Saunders, Mary H.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 12:21 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Cc:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Jenkins, George  
**Subject:** FW: KPMG call regarding media reports

Gail – I advised Lindre to contact you regarding what we can tell KPMG. They are NIST's auditors, covering everything including environmental exposures and are looking at this in terms of audit risk to NIST. My advice would be to share the all staff email we sent out yesterday which speaks to OSHE clearing the lab and building.

P.S. I was not aware that the auditors should be informed

**From:** Jenkins, George  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 12:16 PM  
**To:** Saunders, Mary H.  
**Subject:** FW: KPMG call regarding media reports

FYI. Your insights relative to protocol would be helpful.

Thanks. George

---

**From:** David, Lindra  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 11:31 AM  
**To:** Jenkins, George  
**Cc:** Graham, Adrienne D.  
**Subject:** KPMG call regarding media reports

Good morning George,

I received a phone call this morning from Robin Valentine. She expressed concern that they had not been briefed on the explosion in building 236 before hearing this information on the news. I honestly hadn't found out about it until yesterday as well. I believe the first email I received was around 2pm yesterday.

Going forward, how would we handle a situation like this? Should we discuss protocol?

They will be looking into this further, photos, etc. during the next few days in order to access the potential impact to the financial statement liability.

Thank you,

*Lindra R. David*  
Audit Liaison, Finance Division  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
100 Bureau Drive , 101/A825/MS1621  
Gaithersburg, Md 20899-1621  
Phone: (301) 975-6472  
Fax: (301) 948-2456



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:30 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Subject:** Re: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

Looks good,Gail!

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 21, 2015, at 8:18 PM, "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)> wrote:

Below and attached are revised Qs and As from Jennifer and I that hopefully respond to Rich and Henry's comments. I shortened the draft by addressing all questions about the events of the incident and any possible criminal activity in the last question and answer. I also added a questions and answer about how NIST would mitigate such events in the future.

Please let me know by 9 a.m. tomorrow if you have any corrections or comments. I still need to share them with DOC Public Affairs. Thanks.

### **Qs and As (Responsive Only)** **July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department (MDPD) is underway. The Drug Enforcement Administration is jointly working with MCPD on the investigation. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

#### **Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

**A1.** The laboratory room where the explosion occurred has previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

#### **Q2. Was the explosion caused by a research project or equipment malfunction?**

**A2.** The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts occurring in the specific laboratory room when this explosion occurred. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway that is expected to determine the cause of the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

A3. The affected lab room and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No hazardous materials were detected.

**Q4. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

A4. The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery Police Department and Fire and Rescue Service. The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently made the decision to investigate. NIST agrees with that decision and fully supports their efforts. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the county to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q5. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

A5. On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

The explosion on Saturday, July 18, was not related to the earlier situation.

**Q6. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

A6. The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the Drug Enforcement Agency. The lab has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q7. Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

A7. No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q8. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A8. NIST police officers have access to most rooms at NIST as part of their responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property.

**Q9. What security procedures are in place to make sure that laboratories are only used in approved ways?**

A9. The great majority of NIST laboratory spaces are in active use daily. NIST holds regular safety inspections and requires hazard reviews for every approved activity in every laboratory. Individual laboratories have either key or digital keypad locks and each has staff members responsible for keeping it in compliance with safety and security policies.

**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. Yes.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A11. The safety of the NIST Center of Neutron Research was not reduced. The officer's responsibilities did not include the building that houses the NIST Center for Neutron Research.

**Q12. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

A24. The NIST Police Services group has been authorized by statute for more than 15 years and operates under a delegation of authority from the Department of Homeland Security.

**Q13. Who's in charge of the investigation?**

A25. The Montgomery County Police Department is conducting the investigation, working jointly with the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security staffing, processes and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

In addition, NIST will conduct a review with its research managers to ensure that current protocols are being uniformly implemented to ensure appropriate use and security of laboratory spaces.

**If charges are filed and the employee is named.**

**Q15. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A13. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q.16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

Q16. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

<Bldg 236\_July 2015\_DRAFT\_5.docx>

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:47 AM  
**To:** Brunner, Zahraha (zahraha.brunner@nist.gov); Orellana, Cindy; Rigopoulos, Kristina; Nadeau, Ellen M.; Weinschenk, Craig; Madrzykowski, Daniel Mr.; Bailey, Dawn M.; Schaefer, Christine; Blumenthal, Dannielle; Swenson, Gayle M.; Schen, Michael A. Dr.; Arrisueno, Gladys L; Robinson, Crissy; Gerskovic, Leon; Garcia, Jose R.; Burrus, James N.  
**Cc:** Esser, Mark  
**Subject:** Social media and Bldg 236  
**Importance:** High

Hello all,

I'm sending you this note because you have access to a NIST social media account. We are expecting news and social media coverage of this weekend's explosion to continue to grow over the next few days and are therefore monitoring everything we can.

You can help by letting us know if anything related to the explosion comes in over your own social media channels in the form of posts or comments and we will handle any necessary responses.

I know you know this, but for the record, please do not reference the situation on any of your social media accounts.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,  
Jennifer

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027  
[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Bailey, Dawn M.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:55 AM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: Social media and Bldg 236

I just looked at the Baldrige Twitter account; nothing there, but if you search for "NIST," some folks are sharing media reports. . . .

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:54 AM  
**To:** Bailey, Dawn M.  
**Subject:** RE: Social media and Bldg 236

Thank you, Dawn.

**From:** Bailey, Dawn M.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:48 AM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Cc:** Schaefer, Christine; Eastman, Mary; Fischer, Barbara; Uglich, Barbara A. Mrs.  
**Subject:** RE: Social media and Bldg 236

Thank you for the heads up. We will let you know of anything we see in the Baldrige Twitter, blog, or LinkedIn sites.

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:47 AM  
**To:** Brunner, Zahraha; Orellana, Cindy; Rigopoulos, Kristina; Nadeau, Ellen M.; Weinschenk, Craig; Madrzykowski, Daniel Mr.; Bailey, Dawn M.; Schaefer, Christine; Blumenthal, Dannielle; Swenson, Gayle M.; Schen, Michael A. Dr.; Arrisueno, Gladys L; Robinson, Crissy; Gerskovic, Leon; Garcia, Jose R.; Burrus, James N.  
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[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Locascio, Laurie E.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 9:02 PM  
**To:** Saunders, Mary H.  
**Cc:** Porter, Gail; Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.; Boehm, Jason  
**Subject:** Re: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

No changes.

Sent from my iPad

On Jul 21, 2015, at 8:54 PM, "Saunders, Mary H." <[mary.saunders@nist.gov](mailto:mary.saunders@nist.gov)> wrote:

Please see attached for some suggested edits and a comment. Specifically, we need to clarify when and by whom DEA was called in. Mark should know.

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:18 PM  
**To:** Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Saunders, Mary H.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.; Boehm, Jason  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Subject:** Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

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on the investigation. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

A1. The laboratory room where the explosion occurred has previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

**Q2. Was the explosion caused by a research project or equipment malfunction?**

A2. The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts occurring in the specific laboratory room when this explosion occurred. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway that is expected to determine the cause of the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

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**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. Yes.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

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**Subject:** Re: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

A little hard to review on my phone.

NIST holds hazard reviews --> NIST conducts hazard reviews.

Sent from my iPhone

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**If charges are filed and the employee is named.**

**Q15. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A13. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q.16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

Q16. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

<Bldg 236\_July 2015\_DRAFT\_5.docx>

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 10:02 AM  
**To:** Moore, Rhongelyn  
**Subject:** Re: Wash Post Coverage

That's all we have approved so far. We are working on Qs and As now. Will no doubt take a while to review internally but we'll get them to you as soon as we can.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 21, 2015, at 9:57 AM, "Moore, Rhongelyn" <[RMoore2@doc.gov](mailto:RMoore2@doc.gov)> wrote:

Hi Jennifer,

Per Gail's addendum late yesterday are you advising anything beyond 'confirming the information that the explosion occurred in Bldg. 236, and that an employee was injured, treated, and released from a trauma center and that Montgomery County Police were investigating the incident?' Thanks.

*Rhongey*  
Office of Public Affairs  
Tel. 202-482-7959  
Fax 202-219-4230  
[RMoore2@doc.gov](mailto:RMoore2@doc.gov)

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer [<mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 9:36 AM  
**To:** Moore, Rhongelyn  
**Subject:** FW: Wash Post Coverage

Hi Sorry, we meant to forward to you earlier

[jennifer](#)

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:20 AM  
**To:** [bschulte@doc.gov](mailto:bschulte@doc.gov); Hock, Jim  
**Subject:** Wash Post Coverage

Two pieces on the Post website. One by a staffer and one from AP below and linked. Metro reporter Dan Morse also called me this a.m.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/police-ask-was-anyone-trying-to-make-drugs-at-a-federal-lab-in-gaithersburg/2015/07/20/daf781ea-2f4b-11e5-8353-1215475949f4\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/police-ask-was-anyone-trying-to-make-drugs-at-a-federal-lab-in-gaithersburg/2015/07/20/daf781ea-2f4b-11e5-8353-1215475949f4_story.html)

[Public Safety](#)

Police ask: Was anyone trying to make drugs at a federal lab in Gaithersburg?

By [Martin Weil](#) | July 21, 2015

One person was injured Saturday night in an explosion at a federal laboratory in Gaithersburg, Md., and police are trying to find out whether it was ignited by an effort to make drugs.

“A relatively small explosion” was reported about 7 p.m. Saturday in a lab in Building 236 on the campus of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, said Gail Porter, a NIST spokeswoman.

A security officer was treated and released from a hospital after suffering injuries that were not life threatening, Porter said.

“We are looking at the possibility that this was some sort of chemical reaction due to the manufacturing of drugs,” said Capt. Paul Starks, the spokesman for the Montgomery County police.

He said no one has been charged and the investigation is continuing.

NIST, founded in 1901, is one of the nation’s major physical science laboratories.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/possible-drug-related-explosion-investigated-at-federal-lab/2015/07/21/169b72ce-2f97-11e5-a879-213078d03dd3\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/possible-drug-related-explosion-investigated-at-federal-lab/2015/07/21/169b72ce-2f97-11e5-a879-213078d03dd3_story.html)

### **Possible drug-related explosion investigated at federal lab**

By Associated Press | July 21, 2015

GAITHERSBURG, Md. — Police are trying to determine whether an explosion inside a Maryland federal laboratory that injured one person was the result of an effort to make drugs.

National Institute of Standards and Technology spokeswoman Gail Porter says the explosion was reported Saturday night at one of the laboratories in Gaithersburg.

Porter says a security officer was treated and released from a hospital after suffering injuries that were not life threatening.

Montgomery County police spokesman Capt. Paul Starks says the chemical reaction might have been caused by the manufacturing of drugs.

Starks says no one has been charged in connection with the incident.

NIST, founded in 1901, is one of the nation's major physical science laboratories.

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## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 10:58 AM  
**To:** Schulte, Beneva; Hock, Jim  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Updated NIST Statement

We've additional media inquiries this morning. A second WashPost metro reporter, Dan Morse. WTTG, follow up calls from WTOP and WUSA, ABC News ( no return call yet), etc. Below is an updated statement that includes a few additional facts that I've relayed verbally in response to factual inquiries. The Mont Co. Police Department has now publicly stated that this investigation is being run jointly with DEA. We are reaching out to DEA public affairs to alert them of this and to stay in touch with them.

Please let me know if you have any concerns about this text. Need to share shortly with a few additional reporters. Thanks. Gail

Here is what I can confirm at this time.

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department (MDPD) is under way. The Drug Enforcement Administration is jointly working with MCPD on the investigation. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

For specifics on the status of investigation please contact Captain Paul Starks with the Montgomery County Police Department:

Captain Paul Starks  
Public Information Office  
Montgomery County Police  
240.773.5030  
[Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov)

Thanks,  
Gail

Gail Porter  
Director  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
(301) 975-3392 office  
(301) 367-7385 cell  
[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)  
Follow NIST on



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Locascio, Laurie E.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 12:01 PM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Cc:** Locascio, Laurie E.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G; Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** Re: Qs and As on Building 236

Working on getting the information

Sent from my iPad

On Jul 21, 2015, at 11:32 AM, "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)> wrote:

Hello Laurie, Rich, and Mark,  
Could you please provide responses to a few of the questions we cannot answer, and fact check the ones we have drafted before we send the Qs and As to a larger group for review?

If you could provide your responses by 12:30 that would be very helpful.

Thank you,  
Jennifer

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027  
[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)

<image001.png><image002.jpg><image003.png><image004.jpg><image005.png>

<Bldg 236\_July 2015\_DRAFT\_2.docx>

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 12:37 PM  
**To:** Spurrier, Mark G  
**Subject:** RE: Qs and As on Building 236

I understand. Thank you, Mark.

**From:** Spurrier, Mark G  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 12:28 PM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Cc:** Spurrier, Mark G  
**Subject:** RE: Qs and As on Building 236

Jennifer,

I am working on the response but it may take until 1:00.

Mark

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 11:32 AM  
**To:** Locascio, Laurie E.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G  
**Cc:** Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** Qs and As on Building 236  
**Importance:** High

Hello Laurie, Rich, and Mark,

Could you please provide responses to a few of the questions we cannot answer, and fact check the ones we have drafted before we send the Qs and As to a larger group for review?

If you could provide your responses by 12:30 that would be very helpful.

Thank you,  
Jennifer

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027  
[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 12:50 PM  
**To:** Locascio, Laurie E.  
**Subject:** RE: Qs and As on Building 236

Thank you!

**From:** Locascio, Laurie E.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 12:47 PM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer; Locascio, Laurie E.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G  
**Cc:** Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** Re: Qs and As on Building 236  
**Importance:** High

---

**From:** "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)>  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 at 11:31 AM  
**To:** Laurie Locascio <[laurie.locascio@nist.gov](mailto:laurie.locascio@nist.gov)>, "Kayser, Richard F." <[richard.kayser@nist.gov](mailto:richard.kayser@nist.gov)>, "Spurrier, Mark G" <[mark.spurrier@nist.gov](mailto:mark.spurrier@nist.gov)>  
**Cc:** "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>, "Schufreider, James R." <[jim.schufreider@nist.gov](mailto:jim.schufreider@nist.gov)>, "Acierto, Linda D." <[linda.acierto@nist.gov](mailto:linda.acierto@nist.gov)>  
**Subject:** Qs and As on Building 236

Hello Laurie, Rich, and Mark,  
Could you please provide responses to a few of the questions we cannot answer, and fact check the ones we have drafted before we send the Qs and As to a larger group for review?

If you could provide your responses by 12:30 that would be very helpful.

Thank you,  
Jennifer

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
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Cell: (202) 309-1027  
[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)



## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 4:09 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Subject:** In 236

After finishing with staffers, willie organized ride to spec proj bldg. Lab is very small minimal evidence of anything out of the ordinary

Sent from my iPhone

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 5:45 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail (gail.porter@nist.gov)  
**Subject:** ap

McLEAN, Va. (AP) — An explosion inside a federal laboratory in Maryland appears to be connected to a security officer's small-scale efforts to manufacture methamphetamine, according to a federal law enforcement official.

Authorities who responded to the explosion Saturday night on the campus of the [National Institute of Standards and Technology](#) recovered pseudoephedrine, Epsom salts and other materials associated with the manufacture of meth, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because potential charges are pending.

The materials indicate production of small batches of meth, the official said.

The chemical reaction might have been caused by the manufacturing of drugs, Montgomery County police spokesman Capt. [Paul Starks](#) said. Police said that they are investigating the case jointly with the [Drug Enforcement Administration](#) and that no charges have yet been filed.

[Laura Harris](#), a spokeswoman for the DEA's Washington, division, confirmed the ongoing investigation Tuesday but declined to comment further.

NIST spokeswoman [Gail Porter](#) said the explosion occurred in Building 236 on the institute's campus. That building is not currently used for scientific research, she said, and previously was used for combustible research.

The NIST officer was treated and released from the hospital after suffering injuries in the explosion, and he resigned from his job, Porter said.

The officer suffered significant burns, the federal official who spoke on condition of anonymity said. The officer initially declined treatment and told other officers who responded to the alarm that he had burned himself trying to refill a cigarette lighter, the official said.

NIST, founded in 1901, is one of the nation's major physical science laboratories. It employs about 3,000 scientists, engineers, technicians, and support and administrative personnel, and the headquarters occupies a 578-acre campus in Gaithersburg, about 15 miles north of the nation's capital.

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 7:44 PM  
**To:** Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Saunders, Mary H.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.; Boehm, Jason  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Subject:** Washington Post coverage

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/police-chemicals-at-federal-lab-explosion-consistent-with-meth-making/2015/07/21/313da71e-2fec-11e5-8353-1215475949f4\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/police-chemicals-at-federal-lab-explosion-consistent-with-meth-making/2015/07/21/313da71e-2fec-11e5-8353-1215475949f4_story.html)

### **Police: Chemicals at federal lab explosion consistent with meth making**

By [Dan Morse](#)

Chemicals found after an explosion at a government laboratory north of Washington are consistent with the manufacture of methamphetamine, a Montgomery County police spokesman said Tuesday.

The bizarre incident, which occurred Saturday evening at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, injured a member of NIST's security force, an institute spokeswoman said. The staffer, who was treated and released from a local trauma center, has not been named.

Agents from the Montgomery Police Department and the federal Drug Enforcement Administration are probing the case, said Capt. Paul Starks, a Montgomery police spokesman.

"This is an open investigation. At this point, we're not identifying anyone who may be involved," Starks said. "First, we have to look at all the circumstances and determine if what occurred rises to a criminal violation."

The sprawling NIST campus, in Gaithersburg, is a branch of the U.S. Department of Commerce, and is home to a wide range of testing, experiments and research. Among other pursuits, scientists there have worked to find the most exact measurement attainable of atomic particles.

On Saturday evening, inside NIST's Building 236, a "relatively small" explosion erupted, according to NIST. Laboratory police and firefighters responded, and then called in their counterparts from Montgomery County.

A NIST spokeswoman declined to discuss details about the incident.

Starks would not say whether investigators have determined whether any drug-making chemicals were stored on the property, or what kind of drug-making equipment may have been found there.

Methamphetamine, also called meth, is an [extremely addictive stimulant](#), which can be smoked or sniffed, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. It is made using hazardous chemicals, according to the institute.



Dan Morse covers courts and crime in Montgomery County. He arrived at the paper in 2005, after reporting stops at the Wall Street Journal, Baltimore Sun and Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser, where he was a Pulitzer Prize finalist. He is the author of [The Yoga Store Murder](#).

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[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)  
Follow NIST on

A row of five social media icons: Facebook (blue square with white 'f'), Twitter (blue square with white bird), LinkedIn (blue square with white 'in'), YouTube (red and white play button), and a red and blue circle icon.

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 6:37 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail (gail.porter@nist.gov)  
**Subject:** Updated Qs and As  
**Attachments:** Bldg 236\_July 2015\_DRAFT\_5.docx

Hi Gail,

So far we've just received comments on the latest draft from Henry and Rich. I've updated the draft to reflect their edits. I also cut out some redundancies and some of the questions you've already provided (which I indicate at the top of the document).

Jennifer

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
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National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027  
[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)





## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 7:48 PM  
**To:** Schulte, Beneva; Hock, Jim  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Wash Post Coverage: Bldg. 236 Explosion

The article below is slated for inside Metro in the print edition, according to the reporter. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks, Gail

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/police-chemicals-at-federal-lab-explosion-consistent-with-meth-making/2015/07/21/313da71e-2fec-11e5-8353-1215475949f4\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/police-chemicals-at-federal-lab-explosion-consistent-with-meth-making/2015/07/21/313da71e-2fec-11e5-8353-1215475949f4_story.html)

### **Police: Chemicals at federal lab explosion consistent with meth making**

By [Dan Morse](#) July 21 at 6:20 PM

Chemicals found after an explosion at a government laboratory north of Washington are consistent with the manufacture of methamphetamine, a Montgomery County police spokesman said Tuesday.

The bizarre incident, which occurred Saturday evening at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, injured a member of NIST's security force, an institute spokeswoman said. The staffer, who was treated and released from a local trauma center, has not been named.

Agents from the Montgomery Police Department and the federal Drug Enforcement Administration are probing the case, said Capt. Paul Starks, a Montgomery police spokesman.

"This is an open investigation. At this point, we're not identifying anyone who may be involved," Starks said. "First, we have to look at all the circumstances and determine if what occurred rises to a criminal violation."

The sprawling NIST campus, in Gaithersburg, is a branch of the U.S. Department of Commerce, and is home to a wide range of testing, experiments and research. Among other pursuits, scientists there have worked to find the most exact measurement attainable of atomic particles.

On Saturday evening, inside NIST's Building 236, a "relatively small" explosion erupted, according to NIST. Laboratory police and firefighters responded, and then called in their counterparts from Montgomery County.

A NIST spokeswoman declined to discuss details about the incident.

Starks would not say whether investigators have determined whether any drug-making chemicals were stored on the property, or what kind of drug-making equipment may have been found there.

Methamphetamine, also called meth, is an [extremely addictive stimulant](#), which can be smoked or sniffed, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. It is made using hazardous chemicals, according to the institute.



Dan Morse covers courts and crime in Montgomery County. He arrived at the paper in 2005, after reporting stops at the Wall Street Journal, Baltimore Sun and Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser, where he was a Pulitzer Prize finalist. He is the author of [The Yoga Store Murder](#).

Gail Porter  
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(301) 367-7385 cell  
gail.porter@nist.gov  
Follow NIST on



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Spurrier, Mark G  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 4:31 AM  
**To:** Saunders, Mary H.; Porter, Gail; Kayser, Richard F.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.; Boehm, Jason  
**Cc:** Spurrier, Mark G  
**Subject:** RE: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

Good morning,

Assistance from DEA was requested by the Montgomery County Police Department. They have a trained response unit to handle these types of seizures and support state and local law enforcement agencies across the state.

Thanks.

Mark

**From:** Saunders, Mary H.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:55 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.; Boehm, Jason  
**Subject:** Re: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

Please see attached for some suggested edits and a comment. Specifically, we need to clarify when and by whom DEA was called in. Mark should know.

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:18 PM  
**To:** Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Saunders, Mary H.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.; Boehm, Jason  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Subject:** Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

Below and attached are revised Qs and As from Jennifer and I that hopefully respond to Rich and Henry's comments. I shortened the draft by addressing all questions about the events of the incident and any possible criminal activity in the last question and answer. I also added a questions and answer about how NIST would mitigate such events in the future.

Please let me know by 9 a.m. tomorrow if you have any corrections or comments. I still need to share them with DOC Public Affairs. Thanks.

**Qs and As (Responsive Only)**  
**July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department (MDPD) is underway. The Drug Enforcement Administration is jointly working with MCPD on the investigation. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

**A1.** The laboratory room where the explosion occurred has previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

**Q2. Was the explosion caused by a research project or equipment malfunction?**

**A2.** The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts occurring in the specific laboratory room when this explosion occurred. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway that is expected to determine the cause of the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

**A3.** The affected lab room and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No hazardous materials were detected.

**Q4. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

**A4.** The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery Police Department and Fire and Rescue Service. The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently made the decision to investigate. NIST agrees with that decision and fully supports their efforts. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the country to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q5. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

**A5.** On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

The explosion on Saturday, July 18, was not related to the earlier situation.

**Q6. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

**A6.** The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the Drug Enforcement Agency. The lab has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q7. Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

**A7.** No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q8. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A8. NIST police officers have access to most rooms at NIST as part of their responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property.

**Q9. What security procedures are in place to make sure that laboratories are only used in approved ways?**

A9. The great majority of NIST laboratory spaces are in active use daily. NIST holds regular safety inspections and requires hazard reviews for every approved activity in every laboratory. Individual laboratories have either key or digital keypad locks and each has staff members responsible for keeping it in compliance with safety and security policies.

**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. Yes.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A11. The safety of the NIST Center of Neutron Research was not reduced. The officer's responsibilities did not include the building that houses the NIST Center for Neutron Research.

**Q12. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

A24. The NIST Police Services group has been authorized by statute for more than 15 years and operates under a delegation of authority from the Department of Homeland Security.

**Q13. Who's in charge of the investigation?**

A25. The Montgomery County Police Department is conducting the investigation, working jointly with the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security staffing, processes and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

In addition, NIST will conduct a review with its research managers to ensure that current protocols are being uniformly implemented to ensure appropriate use and security of laboratory spaces.

**If charges are filed and the employee is named.**

**Q15. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A13. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q.16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

Q16. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 6:10 AM  
**To:** Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Re: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

Okay. Will shorten

Gail Porter  
301 975 3392 work  
301 367 7385 cell

On Jul 22, 2015, at 2:45 AM, "Kimball, Kevin A." <[kevin.kimball@nist.gov](mailto:kevin.kimball@nist.gov)> wrote:

General suggestion...let's be more direct in responses. For example: Q5 you don't answer the question until after a long paragraph of verbiage. Reverse the order of the paragraphs. Just say...no this incident was completely unrelated to the explosion a month earlier. Period.

----- Original Message -----

**From:** "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>  
**Date:** Wed, July 22, 2015 2:18 AM +0200  
**To:** "Spurrier, Mark G" <[mark.spurrier@nist.gov](mailto:mark.spurrier@nist.gov)>, "Kayser, Richard F." <[richard.kayser@nist.gov](mailto:richard.kayser@nist.gov)>, "Saunders, Mary H." <[mary.saunders@nist.gov](mailto:mary.saunders@nist.gov)>, "Schufreider, James R." <[jim.schufreider@nist.gov](mailto:jim.schufreider@nist.gov)>, "May, Willie E. Dr." <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)>, "Kimball, Kevin A." <[kevin.kimball@nist.gov](mailto:kevin.kimball@nist.gov)>, "Locascio, Laurie E." <[laurie.locascio@nist.gov](mailto:laurie.locascio@nist.gov)>, "Cavanagh, Richard R Dr." <[richard.cavanagh@nist.gov](mailto:richard.cavanagh@nist.gov)>, "Wixon, Henry N." <[henry.wixon@nist.gov](mailto:henry.wixon@nist.gov)>, "Acierto, Linda D." <[linda.acierto@nist.gov](mailto:linda.acierto@nist.gov)>, "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)>, "Salber, Stephen S." <[stephen.salber@nist.gov](mailto:stephen.salber@nist.gov)>, "Boehm, Jason" <[jason.boehm@nist.gov](mailto:jason.boehm@nist.gov)>  
**CC:** "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)>, "Kimball, Kevin A." <[kevin.kimball@nist.gov](mailto:kevin.kimball@nist.gov)>  
**Subject:** Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

Below and attached are revised Qs and As from Jennifer and I that hopefully respond to Rich and Henry's comments. I shortened the draft by addressing all questions about the events of the incident and any possible criminal activity in the last question and answer. I also added a questions and answer about how NIST would mitigate such events in the future.

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### **Qs and As (Responsive Only)**

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A10. Yes.

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## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Schufreider, James R.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 8:32 AM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Salber, Stephen S.; Porter, Gail; Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Saunders, Mary H.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Boehm, Jason  
**Subject:** RE: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

Agree

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE smartphone

----- Original message -----

**From:** "May, Willie E. Dr."  
**Date:** 07/22/2015 8:03 AM (GMT-05:00)  
**To:** "Salber, Stephen S." , "Porter, Gail" , "Spurrier, Mark G" , "Kayser, Richard F." , "Saunders, Mary H." , "Schufreider, James R." , "Kimball, Kevin A." , "Locascio, Laurie E." , "Cavanagh, Richard R Dr." , "Wixon, Henry N." , "Acierto, Linda D." , "Huergo, Jennifer" , "Boehm, Jason"  
**Subject:** RE: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

All we can definitively say is that the one officer who we know was involved resigned the day following the incident.

----- Original Message -----

**From:** "Salber, Stephen S." <stephen.salber@nist.gov>  
**Date:** Wed, July 22, 2015 7:55 AM -0400  
**To:** "Porter, Gail" <gail.porter@nist.gov>, "Spurrier, Mark G" <mark.spurrier@nist.gov>, "Kayser, Richard F." <richard.kayser@nist.gov>, "Saunders, Mary H." <mary.saunders@nist.gov>, "Schufreider, James R." <jim.schufreider@nist.gov>, "May, Willie E. Dr." <willie.may@nist.gov>, "Kimball, Kevin A." <kevin.kimball@nist.gov>, "Locascio, Laurie E." <laurie.locascio@nist.gov>, "Cavanagh, Richard R Dr." <richard.cavanagh@nist.gov>, "Wixon, Henry N." <henry.wixon@nist.gov>, "Acierto, Linda D." <linda.acierto@nist.gov>, "Huergo, Jennifer" <jennifer.huergo@nist.gov>, "Boehm, Jason" <jason.boehm@nist.gov>  
**CC:** "Huergo, Jennifer" <jennifer.huergo@nist.gov>, "Kimball, Kevin A." <kevin.kimball@nist.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

My comment is with respect to Q/A 14. While I would need to get names and more accurate times, NIST PSG was reviewed by outside consultants in 2009 and again by OSY in 2012. My suggestion for an answer would be that we will continue working with OSY to finish implementing their recommendations. For example, we hired an OSY Security Manager a year ago based on their recommendation, but we have not yet finished transitioning the PSG under OSY. That is currently scheduled to occur before the end of August this year.

I also think it should be stressed that this was a rogue officer and event.

Steve

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:18 PM  
**To:** Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Saunders, Mary H.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.; Boehm, Jason

**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Subject:** Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236  
**Importance:** High

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DRAFT-DRAFT-DRAFT

8/24/2015 1:51 PM 7/22/2015 8:19 AM

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**Commented [ALD1]:** Since the question "did he use chemicals from the lab" came up yesterday...could we say a date when they were removed? I think that gives better context to the fact there were no NIST purchased chemicals used in this event.

**Q2. Was the explosion caused by a research project or equipment malfunction?**

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**Commented [ALD2]:** Wasn't it also evaluated/cleared by MC Haz-Mat?

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**Formatted:** Highlight

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**Commented [ALD3]:** Since this question came up yesterday...

DRAFT-DRAFT-DRAFT

8/24/2015 1:51 PM 7/22/2015 8:19 AM

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DRAFT-DRAFT-DRAFT

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## Huergo, Jennifer

---

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**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 9:05 AM  
**To:** Boehm, Jason; Saunders, Mary H.; Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.  
**Subject:** RE: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

Thanks for everyone's help. Will do another edit with these comments and send to everyone.

**From:** Boehm, Jason  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 9:00 AM  
**To:** Saunders, Mary H.; Porter, Gail; Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.  
**Subject:** RE: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

A few other suggested edits to try and make the answers more direct where it seems possible.

**From:** Boehm, Jason  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 9:31 PM  
**To:** Saunders, Mary H.; Porter, Gail; Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.  
**Subject:** RE: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

Additional comments and suggestion for clarifications on top of Mary's comments.

**From:** Saunders, Mary H.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:55 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.; Boehm, Jason  
**Subject:** Re: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236

Please see attached for some suggested edits and a comment. Specifically, we need to clarify when and by whom DEA was called in. Mark should know.

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 8:18 PM  
**To:** Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Saunders, Mary H.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.; Boehm, Jason  
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A10. Yes.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A11. The safety of the NIST Center of Neutron Research was not reduced. The officer's responsibilities did not include the building that houses the NIST Center for Neutron Research.

**Q12. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

A24. The NIST Police Services group has been authorized by statute for more than 15 years and operates under a delegation of authority from the Department of Homeland Security.

**Q13. Who's in charge of the investigation?**

A25. The Montgomery County Police Department is conducting the investigation, working jointly with the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security staffing, processes and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

In addition, NIST will conduct a review with its research managers to ensure that current protocols are being uniformly implemented to ensure appropriate use and security of laboratory spaces.

**If charges are filed and the employee is named.**

**Q15. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A13. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q.16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

Q16. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 12:45 PM  
**To:** Boehm, Jason; Saunders, Mary H.; Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Schufreider, James R.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Wixon, Henry N.; Acierto, Linda D.; Huergo, Jennifer; Salber, Stephen S.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Subject:** RE: Revised Qs and As --Bldg. 236  
**Attachments:** Bldg 236\_July 2015\_DRAFT\_July22\_12noon.docx

Attached and below for those of you reviewing by phone is our latest Q and A. This draft attempts to answer questions raised, be as direct as possible, and has been further fact checked with additional people. I will be shortly sending this draft to DOC Public Affairs now for their review. If you have any additional concerns please let me know.

I have received a call from a reporter with Science magazine, but otherwise have not received new media calls this morning.

Thanks. Gail X3392

### **DRAFT –DRAFT—DRAFT**

**Prepared: July 22, 2015**

**Contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392**

### **Qs and As (Responsive Only) July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident and then requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD). MDPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and is now working jointly with DEA to investigate the incident. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

#### **Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

**A1.** This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

The laboratory room where the explosion occurred had previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

#### **Q2. Was the explosion caused by a NIST research project or equipment malfunction?**

**A2.** The explosion was not caused by a NIST research project. The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts taking place in the specific laboratory room where this explosion occurred. A joint Montgomery County Police Department/ U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration investigation is underway to determine the cause and circumstances for the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

A3. The affected lab room and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No hazardous materials were detected.

**Q4. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

A4. The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments.

The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently requested assistance from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). A joint investigation by MCPD and DEA is now underway.

NIST fully supports their efforts and is providing assistance as needed. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the county to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q5. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

A5. The explosion on Saturday July 18<sup>th</sup> was not related to any ongoing NIST research project.

*If background about the previous hazardous incident is needed:* On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

**Q6. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

A6. The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. The laboratory room where the explosion happened, as well as the surrounding area, has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q7. Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

A7. No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q8. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A8. NIST police officers have the responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property, and as such they have access to most of the rooms on campus

**Q9. What security procedures are in place to make sure that laboratories are only used in approved ways?**

A9. The great majority of NIST laboratory spaces are in active use daily. NIST holds regular safety inspections and requires hazard reviews for every approved activity in every laboratory. Individual laboratories have either key or digital keypad locks and each has staff members responsible for keeping it in compliance with safety and security policies.

**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. The officer who was treated for injuries was on duty.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A11. The safety of the NIST Center of Neutron Research was not reduced.

**Q12. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

**A12.** The 578-acre (234 hectare) NIST Gaithersburg campus includes 62 specialized research and other types of buildings and requires a police force trained to provide security in that specialized environment. NIST works closely with the Department of Commerce Office of Security to ensure that security procedures and policies in place are consistent with Department and government requirements.

**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

In addition, NIST will conduct a review with its research managers to ensure that current protocols are being uniformly implemented to ensure appropriate use and security of laboratory spaces.

**If charges are filed and the employee is named.**

**Q15. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A15. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q.16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

Q16. A joint Montgomery County Police Department/U.S Drug Enforcement Administration investigation is underway.

**Prepared: July 22, 2015**

**Contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392**

**Qs and As (Responsive Only)  
July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident and then requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD). MDPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and is now working jointly with DEA to investigate the incident. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

**A1.** This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

The laboratory room where the explosion occurred had previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

**Q2. Was the explosion caused by a NIST research project or equipment malfunction?**

**A2.** The explosion was not caused by a NIST research project. The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts taking place in the specific laboratory room where this explosion occurred. A joint Montgomery County Police Department/ U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration investigation is underway to determine the cause and circumstances for the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

**A3.** The affected lab room and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No hazardous materials were detected.

**Q4. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

**A4.** The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments.

The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently requested assistance from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). A joint investigation by MCPD and DEA is now underway.

NIST fully supports their efforts and is providing assistance as needed. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the country to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q5. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

A5. The explosion on Saturday July 18<sup>th</sup> was not related to any ongoing NIST research project.

*If background about the previous hazardous incident is needed:* On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

**Q6. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

A6. The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. The laboratory room where the explosion happened, as well as the surrounding area, has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q7. Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

A7. No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q8. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A8. NIST police officers have the responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property, and as such they have access to most of the rooms on campus

**Q9. What security procedures are in place to make sure that laboratories are only used in approved ways?**

A9. The great majority of NIST laboratory spaces are in active use daily. NIST holds regular safety inspections and requires hazard reviews for every approved activity in every laboratory. Individual laboratories have either key or digital keypad locks and each has staff members responsible for keeping it in compliance with safety and security policies.

**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. Yes.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A11. The safety of the NIST Center of Neutron Research was not reduced.

**Q12. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

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**Q13. Who's in charge of the investigation?**



A25. The Montgomery County Police Department is conducting the investigation, working jointly with the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

In addition, NIST will conduct a review with its research managers to ensure that current protocols are being uniformly implemented to ensure appropriate use and security of laboratory spaces.

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**Q.16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

Q16. A Montgomery County Police Department-led investigation is underway.

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 1:56 PM  
**To:** Schulte, Beneva  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Media Q & A on Bldg. 236 incident  
**Attachments:** Bldg 236\_July 2015\_DRAFT\_July22\_12noon.docx

Beneva:

Attached is a draft Q and A that we've prepared with several NIST subject matter experts (Including Willie May and our legal Counsel Henry Wixon) to collect in one place answers to questions we have gotten from the news media and/or the public.

We have relayed some of the simple factual information already in response to direct questions from media. For example, several reporters have asked what the type of research occurred typically in the laboratory where the explosion occurred. (See question and answer 1. )

Please let me know if you have any concerns about these talking points. We intend for these to be responsive only.

I have only handled one additional media call this morning from Science magazine.

Thanks  
Gail

Gail Porter  
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(301) 367-7385 cell  
gail.porter@nist.gov  
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Gail

**Prepared: July 22, 2015**

**Contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392**

**Qs and As (Responsive Only)  
July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

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Q16. A Montgomery County Police Department-led investigation is underway.

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Caplin, Brittany <bcaplin@doc.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 3:43 PM  
**To:** Schulte, Beneva; Porter, Gail  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Foye-McFadden, Areaka  
**Subject:** RE: Media Q & A on Bldg. 236 incident

Hi Gail,

Can you please re-up the Q&A? Thank you!

---

**From:** Schulte, Beneva  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 3:42 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Foye-McFadden, Areaka; Caplin, Brittany  
**Subject:** Re: Media Q & A on Bldg. 236 incident

Thanks Gail. Plus areaka and Brittany in my office as I head to Kenya. Thanks! Good news about the slowdown in inquiries.

---

On: 22 July 2015 13:56, "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)> wrote:

Beneva:

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We have relayed some of the simple factual information already in response to direct questions from media. For example, several reporters have asked what the type of research occurred typically in the laboratory where the explosion occurred. (See question and answer 1. )

Please let me know if you have any concerns about these talking points. We intend for these to be responsive only.

I have only handled one additional media call this morning from Science magazine.

Thanks  
Gail

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## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Foye-McFadden, Areaka <AFoye-McFadden@doc.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 3:43 PM  
**To:** Schulte, Beneva; Porter, Gail  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Caplin, Brittany  
**Subject:** RE: Media Q & A on Bldg. 236 incident

Got it. We are reviewing them now.

---

**From:** Schulte, Beneva  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 3:42 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Foye-McFadden, Areaka; Caplin, Brittany  
**Subject:** Re: Media Q & A on Bldg. 236 incident

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Follow NIST on



Gail

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 7:35 PM  
**To:** Stoughton, Jason C.; Huergo, Jennifer; Baum, Michael A.; Weiser, Ellen H.; Gerskovic, Leon; Cox, Hoyt A.; Ost, Laura M.; Burrus, James N.  
**Subject:** FW: Town Hall Next Week

Willie wants to do a Town Hall next Thursday, July 30 at 11 a.m. EDT to discuss the explosion in Bldg. 236, proactive steps he's taking to respond to the event, as well as the OPM breach and its effect on NIST (financial) and our employees.

Ellen: Can you please ask Sarah or Alicia to get a room at HML> Ben has already reserved the Boulder auditorium for me.

We'll be working on an all staff note about the Town Hall in the morning.

Thanks,  
Gail

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 7:29 PM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Kayser, Richard F.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Schufreider, James R.; Salber, Stephen S.; Boehm, Jason; Acierto, Linda D.; Saunders, Mary H.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Cc:** Bedrossian, Leona  
**Subject:** Town Hall Next Week

We have reserved the Red Auditorium and overflow in the Green Auditorium for Thursday, July 30, at 11 a.m. EDT, (9 a.m. MDT) and we also have the Boulder auditorium reserved. AV services will request a room at HML in the morning.

We'll work on the invitation to the staff for the Town Hall in the morning and send for review.

Thanks,  
Gail

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## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 7:38 PM  
**To:** Ost, Laura M.; Baum, Michael A.; Stoughton, Jason C.; Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Statement on Bldg. 236 explosion  
**Attachments:** Bldg 236\_July 2015\_DRAFT\_July22\_Final.docx

Been trying all day to remember to share this with you. Here's the statement I've been providing to journalists who ask about the Bldg. 236 explosion. As of late today, we also have an OPA approved q and a. I've been answering questions using this q and a. Please continue to forward any inquiries you receive to me. Thanks.

### Statement from NIST

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory room on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident and requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department (MDPD) is now underway. The Drug Enforcement Administration is jointly working with MCPD on the investigation. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

For specifics on the status of investigation please contact Captain Paul Starks with the Montgomery County Police Department:

Captain Paul Starks  
Public Information Office  
Montgomery County Police  
240.773.5030  
[Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov)

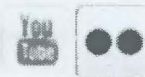
Thanks,  
Gail

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(301) 975-3392 office  
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[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)

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<image003.png>



**Prepared: July 22, 2015**

**Contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392**

**Qs and As (Responsive Only)**  
**July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

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**Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

**A1.** This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

The laboratory room where the explosion occurred had previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

**Q2. Was the explosion caused by a NIST research project or equipment malfunction?**

**A2.** The explosion was not caused by a NIST research project. The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts taking place in the specific laboratory room where this explosion occurred. A joint Montgomery County Police Department/ U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration investigation is underway to determine the cause and circumstances for the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

**A3.** The affected lab room and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No significant hazardous conditions were detected.

**Q4. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

**A4.** The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments.

The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently requested assistance from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). A joint investigation by MCPD and DEA is now underway.

NIST fully supports their efforts and is providing assistance as needed. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the country to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q5. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

A5. The explosion on Saturday July 18<sup>th</sup> was not related to any ongoing NIST research project.

*If background about the previous hazardous incident is needed:* On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

**Q6. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

A6. The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. The laboratory room where the explosion happened, as well as the surrounding area, has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q7. Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

A7. No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q8. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A8. NIST police officers have the responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property, and as such they have access to most of the rooms on campus

**Q9. What security procedures are in place to make sure that laboratories are only used in approved ways?**

A9. The great majority of NIST laboratory spaces are in active use daily. NIST holds regular safety inspections and requires hazard reviews for every approved activity in every laboratory. Individual laboratories have either key or digital keypad locks and each has staff members responsible for keeping it in compliance with safety and security policies.

**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. Yes.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A11. The safety of the NIST Center of Neutron Research was not reduced.

**Q12. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

A24. The 578-acre (234 hectare) NIST Gaithersburg campus includes 62 specialized research buildings and requires a police force trained to provide security in that specialized environment. NIST works closely with the Department of Commerce Office of Security to ensure that security procedures and policies in place are consistent with Department and government requirements.

**Q13. Who's in charge of the investigation?**

A13. The Montgomery County Police Department is conducting the investigation, working jointly with the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

In addition, NIST will conduct a review with its research managers to ensure that current protocols are being uniformly implemented to ensure appropriate use and security of laboratory spaces.

**If charges are filed and the employee is named.**

**Q15. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A13. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q.16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

Q16. A Montgomery County Police Department-led investigation is underway.

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 12:05 PM  
**To:** Saunders, Mary H.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Locascio, Laurie E.; Spurrier, Mark G; Boehm, Jason; Schufreider, James R.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Cc:** Stoughton, Jason C.; Huergo, Jennifer; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** Please Review: Internal Web article, Bldg. 236  
**Attachments:** Bldg\_236\_Update\_DRAFT\_July23\_11\_AM.GP.docx; Bldg 236\_July 2015\_DRAFT\_July22\_Final.docx

**Importance:** High

As agreed to yesterday afternoon, below and attached is a draft news article for the NIST internal website. The article uses the announcement of the Town Hall next week (which we will also shortly send for review) as the "news hook" to describe additional facts about the Bldg. 236 event to keep staff informed and ensure they have accurate information.

We would like to post this article today if possible. Please review and send any concerns or comments. The article draws from the Q and A that was approved by DOC Public Affairs yesterday, also attached. Thanks. Gail X3392

### **Town Hall to Discuss Allegations of Meth Production in Building 236.**

NIST Director Willie May will hold a Town Hall on Thursday, July 30, at 11 a.m. EDT in the Gaithersburg Red Auditorium. Video teleconferencing will be available in the Boulder Auditorium and in Room B120 at the Hollings Marine Laboratory.

The Town Hall will focus on the explosion on Saturday, July 18, in a laboratory room in Building 236 and allegations that it was caused by production of the illegal drug methamphetamine.

The Town Hall will also cover implications for NIST and NIST employees from the recent cybersecurity breach at the Office of Personnel Management.

As discussed in recent all staff emails [link to page with the emails], the Montgomery County Police Department is working jointly with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration to investigate the Bldg. 236 explosion. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life-threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

In announcing the Town Hall, May noted that he has directed that Bldg. 236 be locked and that current activities there be moved to other locations.

"This building is located at the extreme edge of the campus and there have been few active research projects in recent years in the space. For the time being, until our security procedures can be reviewed, I've asked Associate Director for Laboratory Programs Rich Cavanagh to personally review and approve any necessary use of the laboratory space in Bldg. 236."

"I know that seeing these news accounts about the explosion has been very disturbing to our employees and associates. It certainly has been for me," said NIST Director Willie May. "Please know that we are doing everything we can to support Montgomery County Police in their investigation. We are also taking several steps to mitigate the

possibility that NIST laboratory space can be inappropriately used and to best ensure the overall security of our campus.”

NIST Director May also that during the Town Hall he will discuss plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST’s current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST’s security posture.

The Director’s Office has created an internal webpage [link to page] for updated information about the Bldg. 236 explosion and related activities.

### **Background on the Explosion in Bldg. 236**

At about 7 p.m. on Saturday, alarms from Bldg. 236 alerted NIST Police and Fire Departments to an emergency and they responded immediately. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. MCPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

The official spokesman for MCPD, Captain Paul Starks, has been quoted saying, “We believe based on what we have seen that the chemicals and scene were consistent with the manufacturing of methamphetamine, but the investigation and testing continues to determine the facts.”

In the past few days, numerous news reports have reported on the event, some presenting inaccurate information from unnamed sources.

“We’re doing our best to quickly answer any questions from the news media that we can. We cannot answer questions specifically about the ongoing investigation and are directing those to Captain Starks,” said NIST Public Affairs Director Gail Porter. “We are also requesting corrections for clearly inaccurate media reports.”

The NIST Office of Safety, Health, and Environment has conducted a review of the laboratory room and the surrounding environment and found it to be free of hazardous conditions.

Most NIST staff are not familiar with Building 236, which was constructed in the 1960s as part of the original set of campus buildings.

Building 236 is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building. As a safety measure, baffles fitted to the back of the building with rubber gaskets are specifically designed to blow out in the event of higher than normal pressure within the laboratory spaces.

The laboratory room where the explosion occurred is smaller than a typical laboratory module in one of the Gaithersburg general purpose labs and it did not contain any essential laboratory equipment at the time of the explosion.

The lab room had previously been used for combustion research. That research has been completed and the room was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to the incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

For questions, please contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392.

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The Town Hall will focus on the explosion on Saturday, July 18, in a laboratory room in Building 236 and allegations that it was caused by production of the illegal drug methamphetamine.

The Town Hall will also cover implications for NIST and NIST employees from the recent cybersecurity breach at the Office of Personnel Management.

As discussed in recent all staff emails [link to page with the emails], the Montgomery County Police Department is working jointly with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration to investigate the Bldg. 236 explosion. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life-threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

In announcing the Town Hall, May noted that he has directed that Bldg. 236 be locked and that current activities there be moved to other locations.

“This building is located at the extreme edge of the campus and there have been few active research projects in recent years in the space. For the time being, until our security procedures can be reviewed, I’ve asked Associate Director for Laboratory Programs Rich Cavanagh to personally review and approve any necessary use of the laboratory space in Bldg. 236.”

“I know that seeing these news accounts about the explosion has been very disturbing to our employees and associates. It certainly has been for me,” said NIST Director Willie May. “Please know that we are doing everything we can to support Montgomery County Police in their investigation. We are also taking several steps to mitigate the possibility that NIST laboratory space can be inappropriately used and to best ensure the overall security of our campus.”

NIST Director May also that during the Town Hall he will discuss plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST’s current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST’s security posture.

The Director’s Office has created an internal webpage [link to page] for updated information about the Bldg. 236 explosion and related activities.

## **Background on the Explosion in Bldg. 236**

At about 7 p.m. on Saturday, alarms from Bldg. 236 alerted NIST Police and Fire Departments to an emergency and they responded immediately. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested

the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. MCPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

The official spokesman for MCPD, Captain Paul Starks, has been quoted saying, "We believe based on what we have seen that the chemicals and scene were consistent with the manufacturing of methamphetamine, but the investigation and testing continues to determine the facts."

In the past few days, numerous news reports have reported on the event, some presenting inaccurate information from unnamed sources.

"We're doing our best to quickly answer any questions from the news media that we can. We cannot answer questions specifically about the ongoing investigation and are directing those to Captain Starks," said NIST Public Affairs Director Gail Porter. "We are also requesting corrections for clearly inaccurate media reports."

The NIST Office of Safety, Health, and Environment has conducted a review of the laboratory room and the surrounding environment and found it to be free of hazardous conditions.

Most NIST staff are not familiar with Building 236, which was constructed in the 1960s as part of the original set of campus buildings.

Building 236 is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building. As a safety measure, baffles fitted to the back of the building with rubber gaskets are specifically designed to blow out in the event of higher than normal pressure within the laboratory spaces.

The laboratory room where the explosion occurred is smaller than a typical laboratory module in one of the Gaithersburg general purpose labs and it did not contain any essential laboratory equipment at the time of the explosion.

The lab room had previously been used for combustion research. That research has been completed and the room was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to the incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

For questions, please contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392.



[Type here]

**Prepared: July 22, 2015 -- FINAL**  
**Contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392**

**Qs and As (Responsive Only)**  
**July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory room on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident and then requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. MCPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and is now working jointly with DEA to investigate the incident. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

**A1.** This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

The laboratory room where the explosion occurred had previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

**Q2. Was the explosion caused by a NIST research project or equipment malfunction?**

**A2.** The explosion was not caused by a NIST research project. The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts taking place in the specific laboratory room where this explosion occurred. A joint Montgomery County Police Department/ U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration investigation is underway to determine the cause and circumstances for the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

**A3.** The affected lab room and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No significant hazardous conditions were detected.

**Q4. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

**A4.** The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments.

The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently requested assistance from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). A joint investigation by MCPD and DEA is now underway.

NIST fully supports their efforts and is providing assistance as needed. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the country to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

[Type here]

**Q5. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

A5. The explosion on Saturday July 18<sup>th</sup> was not related to any ongoing NIST research project.

*If background about the previous hazardous incident is needed:* On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

**Q6. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

A6. The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. The laboratory room where the explosion happened, as well as the surrounding area, has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q7. Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

A7. No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q8. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A8. NIST police officers have the responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property, and as such they have access to most of the rooms on campus

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**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. Yes.

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[Type here]

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**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

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## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 2:11 PM  
**To:** Schufreider, James R.; Saunders, Mary H.; Wixon, Henry N.; Locascio, Laurie E.  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G; Boehm, Jason; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Stoughton, Jason C.; Huergo, Jennifer; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** Please Review: Internal Web article, Bldg. 236  
**Attachments:** Bldg. 236\_DRAFT\_July23\_2\_00PM.docx

Attached is clean draft that I believe includes all comments so far. We should like to put this out at 3 p.m. if possible. If you haven't already commented please let me know by then if you have any concerns.

Thanks,  
Gail

Gail Porter  
Director  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
(301) 975-3392 office  
(301) 367-7385 cell  
gail.porter@nist.gov  
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## **Town Hall to Discuss Building 236 Explosion and OPM Breaches**

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The lab room had previously been used for spray combustion research aimed at improving measurement of the fuel efficiency of internal combustion engines. That research has been completed and the room was being prepared for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to the incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

For questions, please contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392.

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Saunders, Mary H.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 2:16 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Wixon, Henry N.; Locascio, Laurie E.  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G; Boehm, Jason; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Stoughton, Jason C.; Huergo, Jennifer; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** RE: Please Review: Internal Web article, Bldg. 236

Looks good!

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 2:11 PM  
**To:** Schufreider, James R. <jim.schufreider@nist.gov>; Saunders, Mary H. <mary.saunders@nist.gov>; Wixon, Henry N. <henry.wixon@nist.gov>; Locascio, Laurie E. <laurie.locascio@nist.gov>  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A. <kevin.kimball@nist.gov>; Salber, Stephen S. <stephen.salber@nist.gov>; Kayser, Richard F. <richard.kayser@nist.gov>; Spurrier, Mark G <mark.spurrier@nist.gov>; Boehm, Jason <jason.boehm@nist.gov>; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr. <richard.cavanagh@nist.gov>; May, Willie E. Dr. <willie.may@nist.gov>; Stoughton, Jason C. <jason.stoughton@nist.gov>; Huergo, Jennifer <jennifer.huergo@nist.gov>; Acierto, Linda D. <linda.acierto@nist.gov>  
**Subject:** Please Review: Internal Web article, Bldg. 236

Attached is clean draft that I believe includes all comments so far. We should like to put this out at 3 p.m. if possible. If you haven't already commented please let me know by then if you have any concerns.

Thanks,  
Gail

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## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 2:35 PM  
**To:** Boehm, Jason; Schufreider, James R.; Saunders, Mary H.; Wixon, Henry N.; Locascio, Laurie E.  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Stoughton, Jason C.; Huergo, Jennifer; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** RE: Please Review: Internal Web article, Bldg. 236  
**Attachments:** Bldg. 236\_DRAFT\_July23\_2\_30PM.docx

Several minor updates in this version. Replaced baffles with panels per Steve, retained "combustion research" rather than the longer description per MML, and tweaked sentence on lab equipment per Willie.

**From:** Boehm, Jason  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 2:20 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Saunders, Mary H.; Wixon, Henry N.; Locascio, Laurie E.  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Stoughton, Jason C.; Huergo, Jennifer; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** Re: Please Review: Internal Web article, Bldg. 236

Looks good

---

On: 23 July 2015 14:10, "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)> wrote:  
Attached is clean draft that I believe includes all comments so far. We should like to put this out at 3 p.m. if possible. If you haven't already commented please let me know by then if you have any concerns.

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"This building is located at the extreme edge of the campus and there have been few active research projects in recent years in the space," said May. "For the time being, until our security procedures can be reviewed, I've asked Acting Associate Director for Laboratory Programs Rich Cavanagh to personally review and approve any necessary use of the laboratory space in Bldg. 236."

"I know that seeing these news accounts about the explosion has been very disturbing to our employees and associates. It certainly has been for me," said NIST Director Willie May. "Please know that we are doing everything we can to support Montgomery County Police in their investigation. We are also taking several steps to mitigate the possibility that NIST laboratory space can be used inappropriately and to best ensure the overall security of our campus."

NIST Director May also said that during the Town Hall he will discuss plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help NIST as it considers changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

The Director's Office has created an internal webpage [link to page] for updated information about the Bldg. 236 explosion and related activities.

### **Background on the Explosion in Bldg. 236**

At about 7 p.m. on Saturday, alarms from Bldg. 236 alerted NIST Police and Fire Departments to an emergency and they responded immediately. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested

the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. MCPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

The official spokesman for MCPD, Captain Paul Starks, has been quoted saying, "We believe based on what we have seen that the chemicals and scene were consistent with the manufacturing of methamphetamine, but the investigation and testing continues to determine the facts."

In the past few days, numerous news reports have reported on the event, some presenting inaccurate information from unnamed sources.

"We're doing our best to quickly answer any questions from the news media that we can. We cannot answer questions specifically about the ongoing investigation and are directing those to Captain Starks," said NIST Public Affairs Director Gail Porter. "We are also requesting corrections for clearly inaccurate media reports."

The NIST Office of Safety, Health, and Environment has conducted a review of the laboratory room and the surrounding environment and found it to be free of hazardous conditions.

Most NIST staff are not familiar with Building 236, which was constructed in the 1960s as part of the original set of campus buildings.

Building 236 is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building. As a safety measure, special panels fitted to the back of the building with rubber gaskets are specifically designed to blow out in the event of higher than normal pressure within the laboratory spaces.

The laboratory room where the explosion occurred is smaller than a typical laboratory module in one of the Gaithersburg general purpose labs and it did not contain any laboratory equipment essential to NIST's ongoing research efforts at the time of the explosion.

The lab room had previously been used for combustion research. That research has been completed and the room was being prepared for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to the incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

For questions, please contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392.

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 4:40 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Subject:** Re: Please Review: Internal Web article, Bldg. 236

Nice.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 23, 2015, at 2:10 PM, "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)> wrote:

Attached is clean draft that I believe includes all comments so far. We should like to put this out at 3 p.m. if possible. If you haven't already commented please let me know by then if you have any concerns.

Thanks,  
Gail

Gail Porter  
Director  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
(301) 975-3392 office  
(301) 367-7385 cell  
[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)  
Follow NIST on  
<image001.png><image002.png><image003.png><image004.png><image005.png>

<Bldg. 236\_DRAFT\_July23\_2\_00PM.docx>

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Kayser, Richard F.  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 9:45 AM  
**To:** Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Porter, Gail; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls

Thanks. No comments.

**From:** Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 9:33 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls

Thanks

Looks good.

Rich

----- Original Message -----

**From:** "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>  
**Date:** Fri, July 24, 2015 9:30 AM -0400  
**To:** "May, Willie E. Dr." <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)>, "Spurrier, Mark G" <[mark.spurrier@nist.gov](mailto:mark.spurrier@nist.gov)>, "Saunders, Mary H." <[mary.saunders@nist.gov](mailto:mary.saunders@nist.gov)>, "Kayser, Richard F." <[richard.kayser@nist.gov](mailto:richard.kayser@nist.gov)>, "Wixon, Henry N." <[henry.wixon@nist.gov](mailto:henry.wixon@nist.gov)>, "Kimball, Kevin A." <[kevin.kimball@nist.gov](mailto:kevin.kimball@nist.gov)>, "Salber, Stephen S." <[stephen.salber@nist.gov](mailto:stephen.salber@nist.gov)>, "Schufreider, James R." <[jim.schufreider@nist.gov](mailto:jim.schufreider@nist.gov)>, "Cavanagh, Richard R Dr." <[richard.cavanagh@nist.gov](mailto:richard.cavanagh@nist.gov)>  
**CC:** "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)>, "Stoughton, Jason C." <[jason.stoughton@nist.gov](mailto:jason.stoughton@nist.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls

We will be sending out the Town Hall invite to all staff and will post the attached internal news article shortly. A few areas where minor edits were made are highlighted.

Thanks. Gail

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**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 9:09 PM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.  
**Subject:** Fwd: Assistance with Media Calls

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The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident and then requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. MCPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is now leading the investigation and is working jointly with MCPD and DEA. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

For information on the status of investigation please contact:

Amy Thoreson  
Public Affairs Officer  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
410-277-6689 office

Gail Porter  
Director  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
(301) 975-3392 office  
(301) 367-7385 cell  
[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)  
Follow NIST on



**From:** Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI) [<mailto:Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 6:08 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls

Hi Gail - I'm tied up right now but can call you in a few minutes.  
Thanks!  
Amy

--

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>  
**Date:** 07/23/2015 5:41 PM (GMT-05:00)  
**To:** "Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI)" <[Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov](mailto:Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov)>  
**Subject:** Assistance with Media Calls

Amy:

I am the director of Public Affairs for the National Institute of Standards and Technology. I believe your FBI office is participating in an investigation of an explosion that occurred on our campus on July 18, 2015. Could you please give me a call to discuss handling of media inquiries on this topic?

Thanks,  
Gail Porter

Gail Porter  
Director  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
(301) 975-3392 office  
(301) 367-7385 cell  
[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)  
Follow NIST on



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Saunders, Mary H.  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 10:20 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Subject:** Re: Assistance with Media Calls

Good

---

On: 24 July 2015 09:30, "Porter, Gail" <gail.porter@nist.gov> wrote:  
We will be sending out the Town Hall invite to all staff and will post the attached internal news article shortly. A few areas where minor edits were made are highlighted.  
Thanks. Gail

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Federal Bureau of Investigation  
410-277-6689 office

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National Institute of Standards and Technology  
(301) 975-3392 office

(301) 367-7385 cell

[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)

Follow NIST on



**From:** Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI) [<mailto:Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov>]

**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 6:08 PM

**To:** Porter, Gail

**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls

Hi Gail - I'm tied up right now but can call you in a few minutes.

Thanks!

Amy

--

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>

**Date:** 07/23/2015 5:41 PM (GMT-05:00)

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[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)

Follow NIST on





## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 10:28 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls

- NIST News item is live: <https://inet.nist.gov/pao/news/town-hall-discuss-building-236-explosion-and-opm-breaches>
- Info page is live: <https://inet.nist.gov/pao/information-bldg-236-incident>
- Director's Office homepage (with link to info page): <https://inet.nist.gov/do>
- All-staff email has been sent.
- Calendar event for Town Hall is live.

-Jason

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**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.  
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Public Affairs Officer

Federal Bureau of Investigation

410-277-6689 office

Gail Porter

Director

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National Institute of Standards and Technology

(301) 975-3392 office

(301) 367-7385 cell

[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)

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**From:** Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI) [<mailto:Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov>]

**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 6:08 PM

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**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls

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[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)

Follow NIST on



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Foye-McFadden, Areaka <AFoye-McFadden@doc.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 10:00 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Schulte, Beneva  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: FYI --Town Hall

Thanks Gail.

---

**From:** Porter, Gail [mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 9:35 AM  
**To:** Schulte, Beneva; Foye-McFadden, Areaka  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** FYI --Town Hall

Beneva and Areaka:

Willie has decided that he needs to have an all hands Town Hall to make sure NIST staff members are aware of some actions he's taking in response to the explosion in Bldg. 236. He has shared information about this in detail with Bruce Andrews.

As and FYI, I wanted you to have this internal news item that we're also posting to our intranet so that staff have some factual information about the location where the event occurred. There have been some inaccuracies in the media about some of these points that I've been actively fixing as we see inaccurate articles.

We are being very careful not to discuss specifics of what occurred during the incident as this is part of the active investigation.

Additional new information, the FBI is now leading the investigation, with the Montgomery County Police and the Drug Enforcement Administration assisting.

Thanks,  
Gail

Gail Porter  
Director  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
(301) 975-3392 office  
(301) 367-7385 cell  
[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)  
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**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 10:20 AM  
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**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Subject:** Re: Assistance with Media Calls

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Federal Bureau of Investigation  
410-277-6689 office

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**To:** Porter, Gail

**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls

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Thanks!

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**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls  
**Attachments:** Bldg. 236\_Penult.docx

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Follow NIST on



## **Town Hall to Discuss Building 236 Explosion and OPM Breaches**

NIST Director Willie May will hold a Town Hall on Thursday, July 30, at 11 a.m. EDT in the Gaithersburg Red Auditorium. Video teleconferencing will be available in the Boulder Auditorium and in Room B120 at the Hollings Marine Laboratory.

The Town Hall will address the explosion on Saturday, July 18, in a laboratory room in Building 236 and news media reports that it may have been connected to making the drug methamphetamine, a controlled substance.

The Town Hall will also cover implications for NIST and NIST employees from the recent cybersecurity breaches at the Office of Personnel Management.

As initially discussed in recent all staff emails [[link to page with the emails](#)], law enforcement agencies including the Montgomery County Police Department, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (now the lead agency), are jointly investigating the Bldg. 236 explosion. A member of the NIST security force suffered non-life-threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has resigned from NIST, effective July 19.

In announcing the Town Hall, May noted that he has directed that Bldg. 236 be vacated and secured.

“This building is located at the extreme edge of the campus and there have been few active research projects in recent years in the space,” said May. “For the time being, until our security procedures can be reviewed, I’ve asked Acting Associate Director for Laboratory Programs Rich Cavanagh to personally review and approve any necessary use of the space in Bldg. 236.”

“I know that seeing these news accounts about the explosion has been very disturbing to our employees and associates. It certainly has been for me,” said NIST Director Willie May. “Please know that we are doing everything we can to support law enforcement agencies in their investigation. We are also taking several steps to mitigate the possibility that NIST laboratory space can be used inappropriately and to best ensure the overall security of our campus.”

NIST Director May also said that during the Town Hall he will discuss plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST’s current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help NIST as it considers changes to strengthen NIST’s security posture.

The Director’s Office has created an internal webpage [[link to page](#)] for updated information about the Bldg. 236 explosion and related activities.

### **Background on the Topic**

At about 7 p.m. on Saturday, alarms from Bldg. 236 alerted NIST Police and Fire Departments to an emergency and they responded immediately. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested

the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. MCPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

The official spokesman for MCPD, Captain Paul Starks, has been quoted saying, "We believe based on what we have seen that the chemicals and scene were consistent with the manufacturing of methamphetamine, but the investigation and testing continues to determine the facts."

In the past few days, numerous news reports have reported on the event, some presenting inaccurate information from unnamed sources.

"We're doing our best to quickly answer any questions from the news media that we can. We cannot answer questions specifically about the ongoing investigation and are directing those to appropriate law enforcement officials," said NIST Public Affairs Director Gail Porter. "We are also requesting corrections for clearly inaccurate media reports."

The NIST Office of Safety, Health, and Environment has conducted a review of the laboratory room and the surrounding environment and found it to be free of hazardous conditions.

Most NIST staff are not familiar with Building 236. The building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building. As a safety measure, special panels fitted to the back of the building with rubber gaskets are specifically designed to blow out in the event of higher than normal pressure within the laboratory spaces.

The laboratory room where the explosion occurred is smaller than a typical laboratory module in one of the Gaithersburg general purpose labs and it did not contain any laboratory equipment essential to NIST's ongoing research efforts at the time of the explosion.

The lab room had previously been used for combustion research. That research has been completed and the room was being prepared for a transition to meet new project needs. Prior to the incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

For questions, please contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392.

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Schulte, Beneva <bschulte@doc.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 10:35 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Foye-McFadden, Areaka  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: FYI --Town Hall

Thanks Gail – hope this is dying down for you!

---

**From:** Porter, Gail [mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 9:35 AM  
**To:** Schulte, Beneva; Foye-McFadden, Areaka  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** FYI --Town Hall

Beneva and Areaka:

Willie has decided that he needs to have an all hands Town Hall to make sure NIST staff members are aware of some actions he's taking in response to the explosion in Bldg. 236. He has shared information about this in detail with Bruce Andrews.

As and FYI, I wanted you to have this internal news item that we're also posting to our intranet so that staff have some factual information about the location where the event occurred. There have been some inaccuracies in the media about some of these points that I've been actively fixing as we see inaccurate articles.

We are being very careful not to discuss specifics of what occurred during the incident as this is part of the active investigation.

Additional new information, the FBI is now leading the investigation, with the Montgomery County Police and the Drug Enforcement Administration assisting.

Thanks,  
Gail

Gail Porter  
Director  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
(301) 975-3392 office  
(301) 367-7385 cell  
[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)  
Follow NIST on



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 12:30 PM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: Round ups of News Coverage and Social Media

Can you please provide a paragraph describing a bit of timeline for how the news was reported, by whom, and with links to say the top circulation publication pieces below. Also list any pubs where you know we requested corrections, I think so far it is just Vanity Fair and Smithsonian. I want to use this in note to Willie and other NIST mangers. Thanks.

---

**From:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 12:26 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Esser, Mark  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Newman, Michael E.; Baum, Michael A.  
**Subject:** RE: Round ups of News Coverage and Social Media

Gail, here's a basic news roundup. Let me know if you need more detail.  
CB

Total hits: 40

Top outlets include  
*(print)*  
Washington Post  
Vanity Fair  
New York Magazine  
Popular Science  
Smithsonian  
Chemical & Engineering News  
Science

*(broadcast)*  
ABC News  
CBS News

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 11:39 AM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.; Esser, Mark  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Newman, Michael E.; Baum, Michael A.  
**Subject:** Round ups of News Coverage and Social Media

Chad:  
Could you please take the lead in compiling a round up of the news coverage so far on the Bdlg. 236 event? I'm interested in seeing a list of the publications and television coverage with the highest circulation and some idea of the number of clips found.

So far I've requested corrections to the Vanity Fair piece and for a very confused piece in Smithsonian. I'll have to check my emails for others. If you know of particularly wrong clips that I've missed please send me links.

Mark:  
Could you please do the same for social media? We can't lists all the social media so if you could just review what you see in Hootsuite and then write me a paragraph or two that characterizes the range of outlets especially those with lots of followers and the range of ways its been covered.

Thanks,  
Gail

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Esser, Mark  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 12:31 PM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.; Porter, Gail  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Newman, Michael E.; Baum, Michael A.  
**Subject:** RE: Round ups of News Coverage and Social Media

I came across this clip last night, doesn't look like it made it to broadcast:  
<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/dea-investigates-apparent-meth-lab-explosion-federal-science-facility-n397521>. Didn't find the headline in the clips.

mde

---

**From:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 12:26 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Esser, Mark  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Newman, Michael E.; Baum, Michael A.  
**Subject:** RE: Round ups of News Coverage and Social Media

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*(broadcast)*

ABC News

CBS News

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 11:39 AM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.; Esser, Mark  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Newman, Michael E.; Baum, Michael A.  
**Subject:** Round ups of News Coverage and Social Media

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Thanks,  
Gail

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 1:20 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Esser, Mark  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Newman, Michael E.; Baum, Michael A.  
**Subject:** REVISED Round ups of News Coverage and Social Media

Gail,

Per subsequent conversations, here's a revised summary with more details. Let me know if any of this doesn't gibe with what you've seen in and/or and said to the media.

CB

### Summary of coverage:

The story initially appeared on local *NBC* affiliate *Washington News 4* the morning of Monday, July 20 and appeared in Tuesday's clip report along with several other local broadcasters's video and a brief piece in the *Washington Post*. By Tuesday the *Post* had a longer piece accompanied by video, and the story had been reported in the *Associated Press*, where it was picked up by affiliated outlets nationwide. Most written coverage by this point was by local media, but by Wednesday, written coverage started to pick up, with pieces by *Vanity Fair*, *Chemical & Engineering News* and *Science*. On Thursday more pieces appeared in *Smithsonian*, *Popular Science* and *New York* magazine. Errors in some of these outlets' coverage – *Smithsonian*, *AP* and *Vanity Fair* -- prompted response by NIST PAO. Both *AP* and *Vanity Fair* have made corrections, while the *Smithsonian* writer has yet to respond.

**Total hits:** approx. 40

### Top outlets include:

(print)

[Washington Post](#)

[Associated Press](#)

[Vanity Fair](#)

[New York Magazine](#)

[Popular Science](#)

[Smithsonian](#)

[Chemical & Engineering News](#)

[Science](#)

(broadcast)

[NBC4 News Washington](#) (initial report)

[ABC News](#)

[CBS News](#)

[NBC News](#)

[Washington Post video](#)

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 11:39 AM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.; Esser, Mark  
**Cc:** Huerger, Jennifer; Newman, Michael E.; Baum, Michael A.  
**Subject:** Round ups of News Coverage and Social Media

Chad:

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Thanks,  
Gail

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Esser, Mark  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 2:59 PM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.; Porter, Gail  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Newman, Michael E.; Baum, Michael A.  
**Subject:** RE: Round ups of News Coverage and Social Media

As I reported yesterday, the general sentiment is one of bemusement/amazement/disbelief and people making the same Breaking Bad jokes over and over again. There are a few people who are suspicious that there hasn't been an arrest yet. Others suggest that the fact that the drug may explain why NIST computer security docs are overly detailed/crazy.

For the most part, people have been simply posting straight news stories from the sources we find in the clips. Each time a new story is published, there are a flurry of posts referring to that story, whether is C&E, the Register, Science, The Verge, etc. There hasn't been much in the way of editorializing aside from what I referred to above.

Most of the posters have less than 100 followers, some more than 1,000, one from yesterday is a science writer based in DC with 30k. I can't find her now.

Infowars has picked up on it, though all they did was reprint the PopSci piece, that may balloon <https://twitter.com/libertytarian/status/624321937909493760>.

There are a couple threads on Reddit:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/chemistry/comments/3ec0nv/meth\\_lab\\_explosion\\_at\\_nist/](https://www.reddit.com/r/chemistry/comments/3ec0nv/meth_lab_explosion_at_nist/)  
and  
[http://www.reddit.com/r/conspiracy/comments/3ee9hm/suspected\\_methamphetamine\\_lab\\_explodes\\_at\\_nist/](http://www.reddit.com/r/conspiracy/comments/3ee9hm/suspected_methamphetamine_lab_explodes_at_nist/) and  
[http://www.reddit.com/r/news/comments/3ecvso/meth\\_lab\\_explosion\\_at\\_nist/](http://www.reddit.com/r/news/comments/3ecvso/meth_lab_explosion_at_nist/).

It has made it to Boing Boing [http://boingboing.net/2015/07/24/explosion-at-nist-offices-was.html?utm\\_source=dlvr.it&utm\\_medium=twitter](http://boingboing.net/2015/07/24/explosion-at-nist-offices-was.html?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter). The picture freaked me out for a second, but it was not leaked from the scene.

Wonkette has picked it up <http://wonkette.com/591981/psa-dont-make-meth-in-federal-labs-and-blow-them-up-you-might-lose-your-job>. The wife of one of our people has responded to that <https://twitter.com/Nixadoodle/status/624627065355157504>.

So far, only one employee has referenced it that I have seen, Yash Kapoor in 771: <https://twitter.com/ykap12/status/624603380934021121>.

Basically, this thing is a freight train.

mde

**From:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 12:26 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Esser, Mark  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Newman, Michael E.; Baum, Michael A.  
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Thanks,  
Gail

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Monday, July 27, 2015 9:03 AM  
**To:** Martin, Keith  
**Cc:** Stoughton, Jason C.; Huergo, Jennifer; Esser, Mark  
**Subject:** Re: Quick Bldg. 236 history question

Thanks, Keith. Good to know.

Hope you had a nice time off. We missed you.

Gail Porter  
301 975 3392 work  
301 367 7385 cell

On Jul 27, 2015, at 9:00 AM, "Martin, Keith" <[keith.martin@nist.gov](mailto:keith.martin@nist.gov)> wrote:

Sorry I was on vacation. Building 236 was completed in April 1968. So yes, it was part of the original campus.

Keith Martin  
Librarian  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
100 Bureau Drive, Stop 2500  
Gaithersburg, MD 20899-2500  
Phone: 301-975-2789  
Email: [keith.martin@nist.gov](mailto:keith.martin@nist.gov)

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 6:01 PM  
**To:** Esser, Mark; Martin, Keith; Frederick-Frost, Kristen M.  
**Subject:** RE: Quick Bldg. 236 history question

In case this is helpful, the building is currently called the Special Projects Building, but it was originally called the Hazards Building.

Thanks,  
Gail

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2015 5:58 PM  
**To:** Esser, Mark; Martin, Keith; Frederick-Frost, Kristen M.  
**Subject:** Quick Bldg. 236 history question  
**Importance:** High

I have the sentence below in an internal web article that I'll be publishing tomorrow a.m. Can you verify for me that Bldg. 236 was part of the original campus? Willie remembers doing experiments there in the 1970s and the building certainly looks very old, but I want to be sure this is accurate.

Would appreciate help with this as early as possible tomorrow.  
Thanks. Gail

"Most NIST staff are not familiar with Building 236, which was constructed in the 1960s as part of the original set of campus buildings."

Gail Porter  
Director  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
(301) 975-3392 office  
(301) 367-7385 cell  
[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)  
Follow NIST on

<image001.png><image002.png><image003.png><image004.png><image005.png>

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Sent:** Monday, July 27, 2015 9:08 AM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Porter, Gail; Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Bldg 236 - Qs&As Attached  
**Attachments:** Bldg 236\_Qs&As\_July27.docx

Willie,

Attached is the current Q&A document regarding the Building 236 incident.

Gail is out this morning, so there may be some additional tweaks later. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Thank you,

-Jason

--

**Jason Stoughton**  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)  
[www.nist.gov](http://www.nist.gov)  
301-975-5935  
[jason.stoughton@nist.gov](mailto:jason.stoughton@nist.gov)



**Prepared: July 27, 2015 -- FINAL**  
**Contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392**

**Qs and As (Responsive Only)**  
**July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory room on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident and then requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. MCPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is leading a joint investigation of the incident. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

**A1.** This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

The laboratory room where the explosion occurred had previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

**Q2. Was the explosion caused by a NIST research project or equipment malfunction?**

**A2.** The explosion was not caused by a NIST research project. The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts taking place in the specific laboratory room where this explosion occurred. A joint investigation led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and including the Montgomery County Police Department and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration is underway to determine the cause and circumstances for the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

**A3.** The affected lab room and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No significant hazardous conditions were detected.

**Q4. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

**A4.** The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments.

The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently requested assistance from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). A joint investigation led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation is now underway.

NIST fully supports their efforts and is providing assistance as needed. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the country to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q5. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

A5. The explosion on Saturday July 18<sup>th</sup> was not related to any ongoing NIST research project.

*If background about the previous hazardous incident is needed:* On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

**Q6. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

A6. The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. The laboratory room where the explosion happened, as well as the surrounding area, has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q7. Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

A7. No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q8. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A8. NIST police officers have the responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property, and as such they have access to most of the rooms on campus

**Q9. What security procedures are in place to make sure that laboratories are only used in approved ways?**

A9. The great majority of NIST laboratory spaces are in active use daily. NIST holds regular safety inspections and requires hazard reviews for every approved activity in every laboratory. Individual laboratories have either key or digital keypad locks and each has staff members responsible for keeping it in compliance with safety and security policies.

**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. Yes.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A11. The safety of the NIST Center of Neutron Research was not reduced.

**Q12. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

A24. The 578-acre (234 hectare) NIST Gaithersburg campus includes 62 specialized research buildings and requires a police force trained to provide security in that specialized environment. NIST works closely with the Department of Commerce Office of Security to ensure that security procedures and policies in place are consistent with Department and government requirements.

**Q13. Who's in charge of the investigation?**

A13. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is leading the investigation, working jointly with the Montgomery County Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

In addition, NIST will conduct a review with its research managers to ensure that current protocols are being uniformly implemented to ensure appropriate use and security of laboratory spaces.

**If charges are filed and the employee is named.**

**Q15. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A13. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q.16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

A16. An FBI-led investigation is underway.

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 9:40 AM  
**To:** Wilkinson, Richard; Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: possible employee questions arising from the upcoming Town Hall PowerPoint slides

Thanks Richard.

Jennifer – Richard’s thoughts on Willie’s presentation for tomorrow’s Town Hall are below.

-Jason

**From:** Wilkinson, Richard  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 9:23 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Subject:** possible employee questions arising from the upcoming Town Hall PowerPoint slides

Gail and Jason,

Gail, you asked me to look over Willie’s PowerPoint slides for his Thursday Town Hall Meeting and let you know if I can think of any questions that staff might have arising from the slides. I didn’t think of much, but here are three slight things:

1. Why are the last two slides about the Building 236 situation, when Willie has already dealt with that situation earlier in his talk?
2. About the OPM data breaches, I recently read an article saying that in the future, federal employees will have to start helping to pay for the CSID and other post-breach security services (because it is turning out to be too expensive for the government to foot the entire cost of those services). Is that true?
3. Regarding the second breach, affecting 21.5 million individuals, did that only affect employees who underwent a background investigation in order to get a higher security clearance?

Richard

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 4:42 PM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Subject:** RE: 10 minute warning - media report

Yup, thanks!

**From:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 4:40 PM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: 10 minute warning - media report

Is this the one that was in progress?

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 4:39 PM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Subject:** RE: 10 minute warning - media report

Dan Morse of *The Washington Post* asked a number of questions regarding the recent explosion in Building 236, based on what he'd heard from staff of the Senate Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, which spoke with Willie May today. We provided factual responses where we could, and directed him to the FBI and committee where appropriate.

**From:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 4:21 PM  
**To:** Esser, Mark; Brown, Evelyn A; Bello, Mark; Ost, Laura M.; Huergo, Jennifer; Porter, Gail; Newman, Michael E.; Burrus, James N.  
**Subject:** 10 minute warning - media report

4:30 cutoff. Thanks!  
Chad

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 6:12 PM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: New Washington Post story on Bldg. 236

If you are still here, please give a quick buzz on 8310.  
Thx

**Willie E. May, Ph.D**  
Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology &  
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology

100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1000  
Gaithersburg, MD 20899  
301/975-2300

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 6:10 PM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** RE: New Washington Post story on Bldg. 236

I believe the federal official he's referring to is with the FBI. As I recall, MCPD had explicitly not confirmed what type of drug, and we certainly have not.

Jennifer

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**From:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 6:01 PM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** RE: New Washington Post story on Bldg. 236

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**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 5:56 PM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** New Washington Post story on Bldg. 236

Dan Morse from the *Washington Post* called today to confirm information he heard from the science committee staff. I confirmed the facts we could and directed him to the FBI and committee for anything else. Here is the resulting story.  
Jennifer

### [Congressional committee probes possible meth making at federal lab](#)

By [Dan Morse](#) July 29 at 5:22 PM

A congressional oversight committee has launched an inquiry into possible meth production at a government lab in Maryland and is seeking building access records to track the movements of a former employee, congressional staffers said Wednesday.

The employee, who served as a police lieutenant at the sprawling campus of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, resigned July 19, the day after he was injured during an explosion inside a NIST building. The incident happened about 7 p.m. on a Saturday while he was on duty. **Officials said that chemicals found at the scene were consistent with the manufacture of methamphetamine, or meth, a highly addictive street drug.** [Did anyone say this explicitly last Tuesday?](#)

The officer, who had recently served a brief term as acting police chief of NIST's Gaithersburg campus, has not been charged. The FBI is leading a criminal investigation.

Separately, the U.S. Congressional Committee on Science, Space and Technology received a briefing Wednesday about the incident from NIST director Willie May. He indicated that whatever happened hadn't been going on very long, said Zachary Kurz, a spokesman for the committee. May declined to say whether NIST had determined whether the former lieutenant was making meth, saying that matter is under investigation by law enforcement agencies outside of NIST, according to Kurz.

[\[Chemicals at lab explosion consistent with meth making\]](#)

In a statement Wednesday, committee chairman Lamar S. Smith (R-Tex.) said he was troubled by what he knew so far — particularly that the subject of the investigation served as a high-ranking NIST police officer.

"Even Hollywood couldn't have imagined this plot twist," Smith said. "As the science committee expands its investigation, it is becoming clear we must better monitor those with access to our nation's high-tech research facilities."

NIST, a branch of the U.S. Department of Commerce, normally makes news for its high-level research. Among their other pursuits, scientists there have earned several Nobel prizes for their study of atomic physics.

According to a committee aide, two members of NIST's police force were on duty the night of July 18, when an explosion erupted inside a room in Building 236, which is reserved for special projects and sits on the southern edge of the 578-acre campus. The room in question was not being used for any active NIST research, a spokeswoman for the institute said, and was designed as a place to conduct "combustion research." The explosion didn't damage the structure, she said. The windows, which were designed not to shatter, were blown out whole and fell to the ground.

The explosion set off a heat alarm. NIST firefighters and at least one other NIST police officer responded. They found the lieutenant, who initially said he was trying to fill a butane lighter, according to the committee aide and a law enforcement official with knowledge of the case.

The lieutenant, who had worked for NIST for about 13 years, was treated and released from a local trauma center.

Smith, the committee chairman, wants to get data on the former lieutenant's movements at NIST, perhaps via electronic lock records, so that his committee's staff can determine how much time the officer had spent in Building 236 in recent months. Smith also wants to know what kind of background checks NIST conducts before hiring police officers.

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027  
[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)





## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Kayser, Richard F.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 6:19 PM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer; May, Willie E. Dr.; Saunders, Mary H.; Spurrier, Mark G  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** RE: New Washington Post story on Bldg. 236

The article below refers only to "officials", not Federal officials.

The first paragraph from the 07/21 WP story: Chemicals found after an explosion at a government laboratory north of Washington are consistent with the manufacture of methamphetamine, **a Montgomery County police spokesman said Tuesday.**

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**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 6:10 PM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** RE: New Washington Post story on Bldg. 236

I believe the federal official he's referring to is with the FBI. As I recall, MCPD had explicitly not confirmed what type of drug, and we certainly have not.

Jennifer

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**From:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 6:01 PM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** RE: New Washington Post story on Bldg. 236

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**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 5:56 PM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Spurrier, Mark G  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Porter, Gail; Schufreider, James R.; Acierto, Linda D.  
**Subject:** New Washington Post story on Bldg. 236

Dan Morse from the *Washington Post* called today to confirm information he heard from the science committee staff. I confirmed the facts we could and directed him to the FBI and committee for anything else. Here is the resulting story.  
Jennifer

### [Congressional committee probes possible meth making at federal lab](#)

By [Dan Morse](#) July 29 at 5:22 PM

A congressional oversight committee has launched an inquiry into possible meth production at a government lab in Maryland and is seeking building access records to track the movements of a former employee, congressional staffers said Wednesday.

The employee, who served as a police lieutenant at the sprawling campus of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, resigned July 19, the day after he was injured during an explosion inside a NIST building. The incident happened about 7 p.m. on a Saturday while he was on duty. Officials said that chemicals found at the scene were consistent with the manufacture of methamphetamine, or meth, a highly addictive street drug. Did anyone say this explicitly last Tuesday?

The officer, who had recently served a brief term as acting police chief of NIST's Gaithersburg campus, has not been charged. The FBI is leading a criminal investigation.

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In a statement Wednesday, committee chairman Lamar S. Smith (R-Tex.) said he was troubled by what he knew so far — particularly that the subject of the investigation served as a high-ranking NIST police officer.

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**Huergo, Jennifer**

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**From:** Saunders, Mary H.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 7:39 PM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Singerman, Phillip; Huergo, Jennifer; Porter, Gail; Boehm, Jason  
**Cc:** Kayser, Richard F.; May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Subject:** Re: Mea Culpa -- sort of

Looks good to me

On: 30 July 2015 19:34, "May, Willie E. Dr." <willie.may@nist.gov> wrote:

Dear All

Rich Kayser shared with me that he had heard from several staff that my framing of the 236 incident as a "near miss" caused both confusion and concern from some of our staff. See below what he and I have put together to try and clarify my intentions and address their concern. Comments welcome. Plan to send out in the morning. Thx

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Colleagues -

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Public and Business Affairs will be posting the slides that I used for my discussions with you soon as well.

Have a safe and enjoyable weekend all!

WEM

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Willie E. May, Ph.D

Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology &  
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology

100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1000  
Gaithersburg, MD 20899  
301/975-2300

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**Huergo, Jennifer**

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**From:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 7:48 PM  
**To:** Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Saunders, Mary H.; Singerman, Phillip; Huergo, Jennifer; Porter, Gail; Boehm, Jason  
**Cc:** Kayser, Richard F.  
**Subject:** Re: Mea Culpa -- sort of

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----- Original Message -----

From: "Cavanagh, Richard R Dr." <richard.cavanagh@nist.gov>  
Date: Thu, July 30, 2015 7:45 PM -0400  
To: "May, Willie E. Dr." <willie.may@nist.gov>, "Saunders, Mary H." <mary.saunders@nist.gov>, "Singerman, Phillip" <phillip.singerman@nist.gov>, "Huergo, Jennifer" <jennifer.huergo@nist.gov>, "Porter, Gail" <gail.porter@nist.gov>, "Boehm, Jason" <jason.boehm@nist.gov>  
CC: "Kayser, Richard F." <richard.kayser@nist.gov>  
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To: "Saunders, Mary H." <mary.saunders@nist.gov>, "Cavanagh, Richard R Dr." <richard.cavanagh@nist.gov>, "Singerman, Phillip" <phillip.singerman@nist.gov>, "Huergo, Jennifer" <jennifer.huergo@nist.gov>, "Porter, Gail" <gail.porter@nist.gov>, "Boehm, Jason" <jason.boehm@nist.gov>  
CC: "Kayser, Richard F." <richard.kayser@nist.gov>, "May, Willie E. Dr." <willie.may@nist.gov>  
Subject: Mea Culpa -- sort of

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Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology

100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1000  
Gaithersburg, MD 20899  
301/975-2300

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 9:11 AM  
**To:** 'Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI)'  
**Subject:** RE: NIST Bldg. 236

Thank you so much, Amy. Appreciate it.

Jennifer

**From:** Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI) [mailto: Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 8:10 AM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Cc:** Starks, Paul  
**Subject:** RE: NIST Bldg. 236

Jennifer - all good from us on information in the slides.  
Please let me know if you need anything further from me.  
Thanks  
Amy

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Huergo, Jennifer" <jennifer.huergo@nist.gov>  
**Date:** 07/29/2015 10:02 PM (GMT-05:00)  
**To:** "Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI)" <Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov>  
**Cc:** "Starks, Paul" <Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: NIST Bldg. 236

Thank you both so much!

Jennifer

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 29, 2015, at 7:51 PM, "Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI)" <Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov> wrote:

Jennifer - I'm not at a computer right now but can take a look for you this evening. Thanks Paul!  
Amy

----- Original message -----

**From:** "Starks, Paul" <Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov>

Date:07/29/2015 7:44 PM (GMT-05:00)

To: "Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI)" <Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov>, Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov

Subject: Fwd: NIST Bldg. 236

Jennifer:

I'm sure it's good as far as MCP is concerned. I'm copying Amy Thoreson. She is pretty regular and speaks for the FBI.

Good luck with the town meeting.

Captain Paul Starks  
Public Information Office  
Montgomery County Police  
240.773.5030

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Huergo, Jennifer" <jennifer.huergo@nist.gov>  
**To:** "Starks, Paul" <Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** NIST Bldg. 236

Hello Paul,

My apologies for disturbing your vacation. Your colleague who answered your phone thought you were the best person to help with this.

Dr. May is doing a "town hall" meeting at 11 am tomorrow (Thurs.) for NIST staff and he's put together a few slides for his presentation.

He was hoping you could review them to make sure he is not overstepping in any details regarding the investigation. He's also asked that we allow the FBI to review the slides.

I have not had any contact with anyone from the FBI (and Gail is on medical leave today and tomorrow) so I was wondering if you could help make that connection as well.

Thank you for your help,  
Jennifer

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027  
Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 7:52 PM  
**To:** Saunders, Mary H.; May, Willie E. Dr.; Singerman, Phillip; Huergo, Jennifer; Porter, Gail; Boehm, Jason  
**Cc:** Kayser, Richard F.  
**Subject:** Re: Mea Culpa -- sort of

I agree

----- Original Message -----

**From:** "Saunders, Mary H." <mary.saunders@nist.gov>  
**Date:** Thu, July 30, 2015 7:51 PM -0400  
**To:** "May, Willie E. Dr." <willie.may@nist.gov>, "Cavanagh, Richard R Dr." <richard.cavanagh@nist.gov>, "Singerman, Phillip" <phillip.singerman@nist.gov>, "Huergo, Jennifer" <jennifer.huergo@nist.gov>, "Porter, Gail" <gail.porter@nist.gov>, "Boehm, Jason" <jason.boehm@nist.gov>  
**CC:** "Kayser, Richard F." <richard.kayser@nist.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Mea Culpa -- sort of

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On: 30 July 2015 19:47, "May, Willie E. Dr." <willie.may@nist.gov> wrote:

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Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology &  
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Gaithersburg, MD 20899  
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**To:** Saunders, Mary H.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Singerman, Phillip; Huergo, Jennifer; Porter, Gail; Boehm, Jason  
**Cc:** Kayser, Richard F.; Bedrossian, Leona  
**Subject:** Re: Mea Culpa -- sort of

Thx. Great idea. Will do.

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Also at the meeting, a staff member pointed out that the incident was not a "near miss" from a safety perspective (see definitions below): an employee suffered injuries requiring treatment at a local trauma center. I couldn't agree more that the incident was not a safety "near miss," and I am grateful to this individual for raising the issue so I can try to clarify my intentions.

OFPM will be posting the initial incident report in NIST's Incident Reporting and Investigation System (IRIS) soon, and OSHE will be recording the incident on NIST's OSHA Injury and Illness Log for calendar year 2015.

Public and Business Affairs will be posting the slides that I used for my discussions with you soon as well.

Have a safe and enjoyable weekend all!

WEM

Definitions from the NIST Incident Reporting and Investigation Suborder:



- **Incident** - A work-related event in which any of the following, individually or in combination, occurred or could have occurred: an injury or illness; an unauthorized spill or release of hazardous or regulated material to the environment; damage or loss of equipment or property. The "could have occurred" situation corresponds to a "near miss".
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**Willie E. May, Ph.D**

Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology &  
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology

100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1000  
Gaithersburg, MD 20899  
301/975-2300

**Huergo, Jennifer**

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 7:54 PM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Cc:** Saunders, Mary H.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Singerman, Phillip; Huergo, Jennifer; Boehm, Jason; Kayser, Richard F.; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Subject:** Re: Mea Culpa -- sort of

Adding Kevin.

The definitions below include the phrase "work related." Should we include the incident in IRIS but on the report state that the circumstances are under investigation?

Also, this is a very small thing, but I suggest removing the exclamation point on the last sentence.

Gail Porter  
301 975 3392 work  
301 367 7385 cell

On Jul 30, 2015, at 7:34 PM, "May, Willie E. Dr." <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)> wrote:

Dear All

Rich Kayser shared with me that he had heard from several staff that my framing of the 236 incident as a "near miss" caused both confusion and concern from some of our staff. See below what he and I have put together to try and clarify my intentions and address their concern. Comments welcome. Plan to send out in the morning. Thx

++++  
++++

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Willie E. May, Ph.D  
Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology &  
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology

100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1000  
Gaithersburg, MD 20899

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 7:59 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Cc:** Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Saunders, Mary H.; Singerman, Phillip; Huergo, Jennifer; Boehm, Jason; Kayser, Richard F.; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Subject:** Re: Mea Culpa -- sort of

Thx. Agreed

----- Original Message -----

**From:** "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>  
**Date:** Thu, July 30, 2015 7:56 PM -0400  
**To:** "May, Willie E. Dr." <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)>  
**CC:** "Cavanagh, Richard R Dr." <[richard.cavanagh@nist.gov](mailto:richard.cavanagh@nist.gov)>, "Saunders, Mary H." <[mary.saunders@nist.gov](mailto:mary.saunders@nist.gov)>, "Singerman, Phillip" <[phillip.singerman@nist.gov](mailto:phillip.singerman@nist.gov)>, "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)>, "Boehm, Jason" <[jason.boehm@nist.gov](mailto:jason.boehm@nist.gov)>, "Kayser, Richard F." <[richard.kayser@nist.gov](mailto:richard.kayser@nist.gov)>, "Kimball, Kevin A." <[kevin.kimball@nist.gov](mailto:kevin.kimball@nist.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Mea Culpa -- sort of

I believe we have already posted the slides on the internal web so a link would likely be better to include.

Gail Porter  
301 975 3392 work  
301 367 7385 cell

On Jul 30, 2015, at 7:47 PM, "May, Willie E. Dr." <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)> wrote:

Will not limit to gburg as will be shown in slides.

Question is for convenience should I attach pdf of slides re incident to note to staff?

----- Original Message -----

**From:** "Cavanagh, Richard R Dr." <[richard.cavanagh@nist.gov](mailto:richard.cavanagh@nist.gov)>  
**Date:** Thu, July 30, 2015 7:45 PM -0400  
**To:** "May, Willie E. Dr." <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)>, "Saunders, Mary H." <[mary.saunders@nist.gov](mailto:mary.saunders@nist.gov)>, "Singerman, Phillip" <[phillip.singerman@nist.gov](mailto:phillip.singerman@nist.gov)>, "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)>, "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>, "Boehm, Jason" <[jason.boehm@nist.gov](mailto:jason.boehm@nist.gov)>  
**CC:** "Kayser, Richard F." <[richard.kayser@nist.gov](mailto:richard.kayser@nist.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Mea Culpa -- sort of

May not want to limit the context to Gaithersburg. The rest of the message is spot on.

----- Original Message -----

**From:** "May, Willie E. Dr." <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)>  
**Date:** Thu, July 30, 2015 7:34 PM -0400  
**To:** "Saunders, Mary H." <[mary.saunders@nist.gov](mailto:mary.saunders@nist.gov)>, "Cavanagh, Richard R Dr." <[richard.cavanagh@nist.gov](mailto:richard.cavanagh@nist.gov)>, "Singerman, Phillip" <[phillip.singerman@nist.gov](mailto:phillip.singerman@nist.gov)>, "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)>, "Porter, Gail" <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>, "Boehm, Jason" <[jason.boehm@nist.gov](mailto:jason.boehm@nist.gov)>  
**CC:** "Kayser, Richard F." <[richard.kayser@nist.gov](mailto:richard.kayser@nist.gov)>, "May, Willie E. Dr." <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)>  
**Subject:** Mea Culpa -- sort of

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**Willie E. May, Ph.D**

Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology &  
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology

100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1000  
Gaithersburg, MD 20899  
301/975-2300

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 9:11 AM  
**To:** 'Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI)'  
**Subject:** RE: NIST Bldg. 236

Thank you so much, Amy. Appreciate it.

Jennifer

**From:** Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI) [mailto: Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 8:10 AM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Cc:** Starks, Paul  
**Subject:** RE: NIST Bldg. 236

Jennifer - all good from us on information in the slides.  
Please let me know of you need anything further from me.  
Thanks  
Amy

----- Original message -----

From: "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)>  
Date: 07/29/2015 10:02 PM (GMT-05:00)  
To: "Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI)" <[Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov](mailto:Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov)>  
Cc: "Starks, Paul" <[Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov)>  
Subject: Re: NIST Bldg. 236

Thank you both so much!

Jennifer

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 29, 2015, at 7:51 PM, "Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI)" <[Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov](mailto:Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov)> wrote:

Jennifer - I'm not at a computer right now but can take a look for you this evening. Thanks Paul!  
Amy

--

----- Original message -----

From: "Starks, Paul" <[Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov)>

Date:07/29/2015 7:44 PM (GMT-05:00)

To: "Thoreson, Amy J. (BA) (FBI)" <[Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov](mailto:Amy.Thoreson@ic.fbi.gov)>, [Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)

Subject: Fwd: NIST Bldg. 236

Jennifer:

I'm sure it's good as far as MCP is concerned. I'm copying Amy Thoreson. She is pretty regular and speaks for the FBI.

Good luck with the town meeting.

Captain Paul Starks  
Public Information Office  
Montgomery County Police  
240.773.5030

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)>  
**To:** "Starks, Paul" <[Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Paul.Starks@montgomerycountymd.gov)>  
**Subject:** NIST Bldg. 236

Hello Paul,

My apologies for disturbing your vacation. Your colleague who answered your phone thought you were the best person to help with this.

Dr. May is doing a "town hall" meeting at 11 am tomorrow (Thurs.) for NIST staff and he's put together a few slides for his presentation.

He was hoping you could review them to make sure he is not overstepping in any details regarding the investigation. He's also asked that we allow the FBI to review the slides.

I have not had any contact with anyone from the FBI (and Gail is on medical leave today and tomorrow) so I was wondering if you could help make that connection as well.

Thank you for your help,  
Jennifer

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027  
[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 9:19 AM  
**To:** Stoughton, Jason C.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Porter, Gail; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: Town Hall All-Staff Reminder Email

- **Explosion in Building 236 ...**
  - *and actions NIST is taking in response to the incident*
  
- **OPM Data Breach(es)...**
  - *and implications for NIST and NIST employees*
  
- **FY16 Budget Update**
  
- **Questions and Discussion**

Think we should share with them the three topics to be discussed.

**Willie E. May, Ph.D**

Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology &  
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology

100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1000  
Gaithersburg, MD 20899  
301/975-2300

**From:** Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 9:01 AM  
**To:** Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Porter, Gail; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: Town Hall All-Staff Reminder Email

Thank you. If anyone has changes, please let me know by 9:15.

-Jason

**From:** Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 8:58 AM  
**To:** Stoughton, Jason C.; Porter, Gail; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: Town Hall All-Staff Reminder Email

I agree that a reminder is appropriate.

This text looks fine to me.

Rich

**From:** Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 8:34 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>; May, Willie E. Dr. <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)>; Spurrier, Mark G <[mark.spurrier@nist.gov](mailto:mark.spurrier@nist.gov)>; Saunders, Mary H. <[mary.saunders@nist.gov](mailto:mary.saunders@nist.gov)>; Kayser, Richard F. <[richard.kayser@nist.gov](mailto:richard.kayser@nist.gov)>; Wixon, Henry N. <[henry.wixon@nist.gov](mailto:henry.wixon@nist.gov)>; Kimball, Kevin A. <[kevin.kimball@nist.gov](mailto:kevin.kimball@nist.gov)>; Salber, Stephen S. <[stephen.salber@nist.gov](mailto:stephen.salber@nist.gov)>; Schufreider, James R. <[jim.schufreider@nist.gov](mailto:jim.schufreider@nist.gov)>; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr. <[richard.cavanagh@nist.gov](mailto:richard.cavanagh@nist.gov)>  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)>  
**Subject:** Town Hall All-Staff Reminder Email

It think it's a good idea to send out a reminder about the Town Hall today via all-staff email.

Does the copy below still look correct to everyone? It's nearly identical to the all-staff email we sent on July 24.

Thank you,

-Jason

-----  
**SUBJECT:**

Reminder: Director's Town Hall Today at 11 a.m. EDT

**BODY:**

**A reminder that NIST Director Willie May will hold a Town Hall today, Thursday, July 30, at 11 a.m. EDT in the Gaithersburg Red Auditorium. Video teleconferencing will be available to NIST Boulder's auditorium and to Room B120 at the Hollings Marine Laboratory.**

The Town Hall will focus on the recent explosion in Building 236 and news media reports that it may have been connected to making the drug methamphetamine, a controlled substance.

May will explain actions NIST is taking in response to the incident and answer questions from staff. May has directed that Bldg. 236 be vacated and secured.

"This building is located at the extreme edge of the campus and there have been few active research projects in recent years in the space," said May. "For the time being, until our security procedures can be reviewed, I've asked Acting

Associate Director for Laboratory Programs Rich Cavanagh to personally review and approve any necessary use of the space in Bldg. 236.”

He will also discuss plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST’s current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help NIST as it considers changes to strengthen NIST’s security posture.

Following the Bldg. 236 discussion, May and other senior NIST leaders will discuss implications for NIST and NIST employees from the recent cybersecurity breaches at the Office of Personnel Management.

For additional information, the Director’s Office has created an internal webpage with updated information about the Bldg. 236 explosion and related activities.

-----  
**From:** Stoughton, Jason C.

**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 10:28 AM

**To:** Porter, Gail; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.

**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer

**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls

- NIST News item is live: <https://inet.nist.gov/pao/news/town-hall-discuss-building-236-explosion-and-opm-breaches>
- Info page is live: <https://inet.nist.gov/pao/information-bldg-236-incident>
- Director’s Office homepage (with link to info page): <https://inet.nist.gov/do>
- All-staff email has been sent.
- Calendar event for Town Hall is live.

-Jason

**From:** Porter, Gail

**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 9:30 AM

**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.

**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.

**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls

We will be sending out the Town Hall invite to all staff and will post the attached internal news article shortly. A few areas where minor edits were made are highlighted.

Thanks. Gail

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** allstaff@nist.gov on behalf of NIST Announcer <announce@nist.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 9:22 AM  
**To:** ALLSTAFF  
**Subject:** Reminder: Director's Town Hall Today at 11 a.m. EDT

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## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 10:05 AM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Subject:** RE: WEM NIST Town Hall Meeting 23 Mar 2015 final.pptx

Willie,  
If this is ready to go, may I provide it to our AV folks down in the Red Auditorium?

Thank you,  
Jennifer

**From:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 9:27 AM  
**To:** NLB  
**Cc:** Parris, Reenie M.  
**Subject:** WEM NIST Town Hall Meeting 23 Mar 2015 final.pptx

Dear All

As a preview, see attached the slides that will be used for today's discussions with Staff. The info presented regarding the 236 incident has been vetted and cleared by both the FBI and MCPD.

# **NIST Town Hall Meeting**

**July 30, 2015**

**Red Auditorium in Gaithersburg**

*with Video Teleconference to Boulder and Charleston*

---

**Dr. Willie E. May**

**NIST Director**

**and**

**Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology**

**National Institute of  
Standards and Technology**

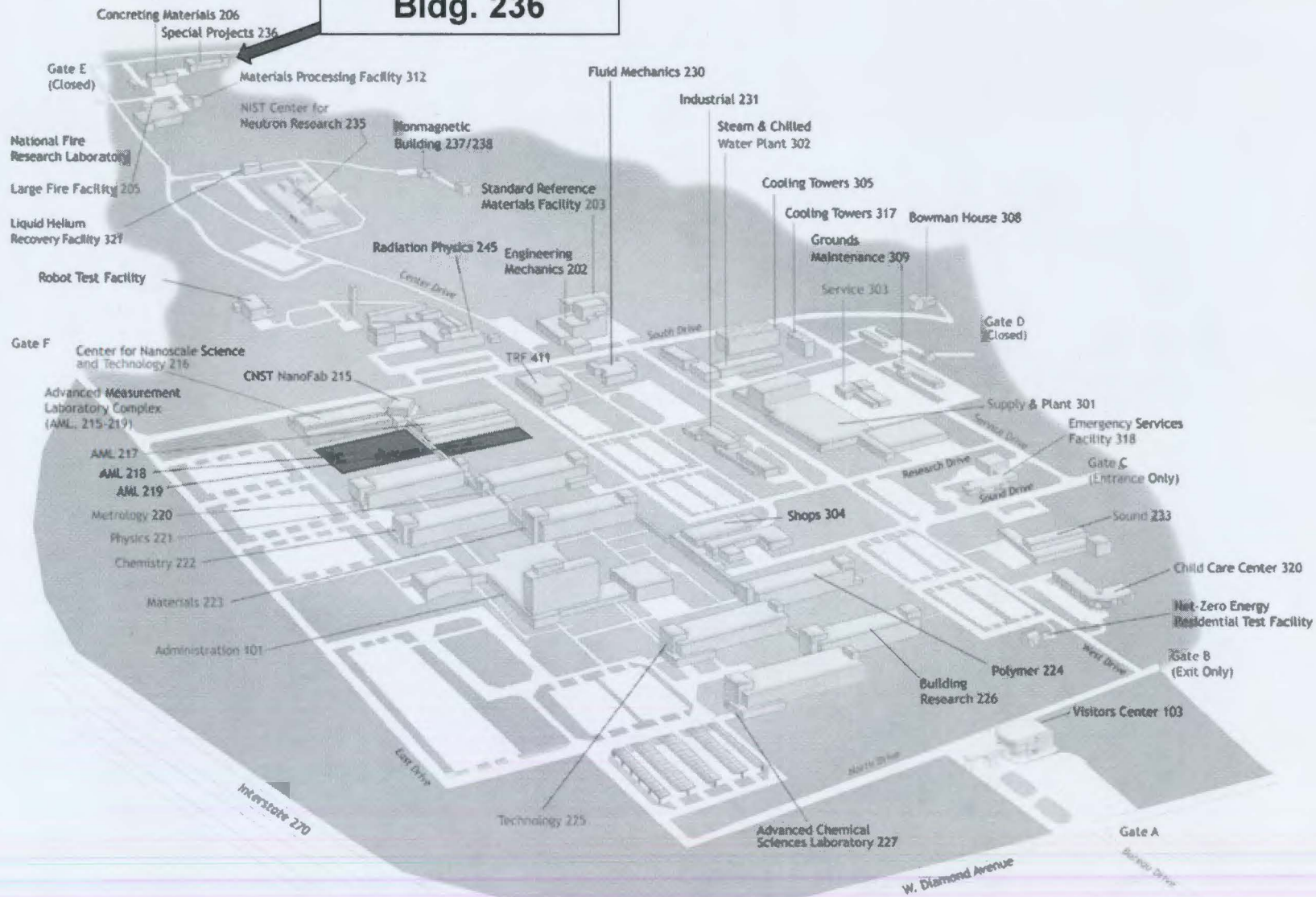
**NIST**  
National Institute of  
Standards and Technology

# Topics

- **Explosion in Building 236 ...**
  - *and actions NIST is taking in response to the incident*
  
- **OPM Data Breach(es)...**
  - *and implications for NIST and NIST employees*
  
- **FY16 Budget Update**
  
- **Questions and Discussion**

# NIST Gaithersburg Campus Map

**Special Projects  
Bldg. 236**





## Building 236 Incident

- **At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory room in Bldg. 236.**
  - A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released.
  - The incident is under investigation due to the presence of what appeared to be drug manufacturing evidence.
  - The officer resigned from Federal Service, effective July 19.
  
- **The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident and then requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments.**
  - We thank the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments (MCPD) for their professional response to this incident.
  - MCPD requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.
  - The Federal Bureau of Investigation is now leading the investigation and is working jointly with MCPD, DEA and DoC OIG.
  - NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.
  - **External Investigators have commended NIST Emergency Services staff for their actions immediately following the explosion.**

## Saturday, July 18, 2015: Timeline of Events

- **6:42 p.m.**
  - A Heat Alarm Activation occurred in Building 236.
  - NIST firefighters immediately responded to the alarm.
  
- **7:15 p.m.**
  - Based on their observations, the firefighters requested police assistance.
  - Shortly after arrival, the responding police officer notified the Acting NIST Police Chief Young.
  
- **7:32 p.m.**
  - The Acting Police Chief Young arrived at NIST and requested assistance of a Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) drug detection canine unit.
  
- **~ 8:15 p.m.**
  - MCPD canine unit arrived at NIST.
  
- **~ 9:30 p.m.**
  - Additional MCPD resources arrive; MCPD took leadership of the investigation.

## **Actions NIST is taking in response to the incident**

- **We have restricted open NIST Staff access to Building 236 until further notice. Access will require permission by the NIST Associate Director for Laboratory Programs.**
  - No critical research activities were taking place in the building.
  - It was largely unoccupied and is located in a remote area of the campus.
  - Before normal access to Building 236 is restored, we will evaluate the security posture of the building and that remote area of the campus.
  
- **We are reevaluating the security protocols for NIST starting with laboratory workspaces at the NIST Gaithersburg Campus.**
  - Plans are to take appropriate measures to ensure that our mechanisms for preventing unauthorized access and unauthorized activities are adequate.
    - We are reviewing the security posture of both our Gaithersburg and Boulder Campuses.
  
- **No methamphetamine precursor chemicals have been reported as missing from our chemical inventory database.**
  - However, we are evaluating whether additional controls, above those required by statute or regulation, should be implemented to afford tighter security of selected materials.

## **Actions NIST is taking in response to the incident – Cont'd**

- **We are reviewing NIST security patrol procedures, including required check-in times, and strengthening our internal controls related to afterhours access and patrols of the NIST Gaithersburg and Boulder campuses.**
- **We are investigating the installation of individual electronic locks on doors for individual labs to improve access control and accountability.**
  - Access then could be limited on an individual basis, as approved by laboratory management.
- **We plan to identify 3-5 external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus to conduct independent reviews of NIST's current security posture (both campuses), including staffing, processes, policies and procedures.**
- **Remember:**
  - **You should be aware that building access logs are archived in the NIST security system and are periodically reviewed for security purposes.** This is a generally-accepted best practice in the security field.
  - **You are also an important part of the NIST security posture.** If you see something out of the ordinary, particularly as it relates to accessing laboratory space or misuse of government space and/or equipment– **please speak up.**

## OPM Data Breaches

- **First breach, announced June 4, of employee personnel data**
  - Affected approximately 4.2 million current and former employees.
    - **All NIST employees should assume they are affected.**
  - Notifications were sent in June.
    - Primarily, some were sent via email and some via US Mail.
    - NIST employees not notified should call CSID, 844-777-2743, to verify and obtain victim support service enrollment information.
  
- **Second breach, announced June 12, of background investigation data**
  - Affected approximately 21.5 million individuals that have undergone an OPM background investigation in or after year 2000.
    - **Breach includes: employees, associates, and some non-applicants, including family members.**
  - Notification letters primarily will be sent by US Mail.
    - Email notifications may be used when mailing address is not available.
    - Notifications will be sent after OPM has contracted a vendor.
  - **Once notified, affected individuals will be auto-enrolled in some services and will need to take action, as described in the notifications, to enroll in others.**

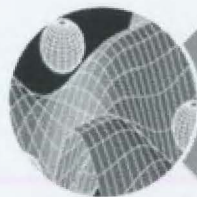
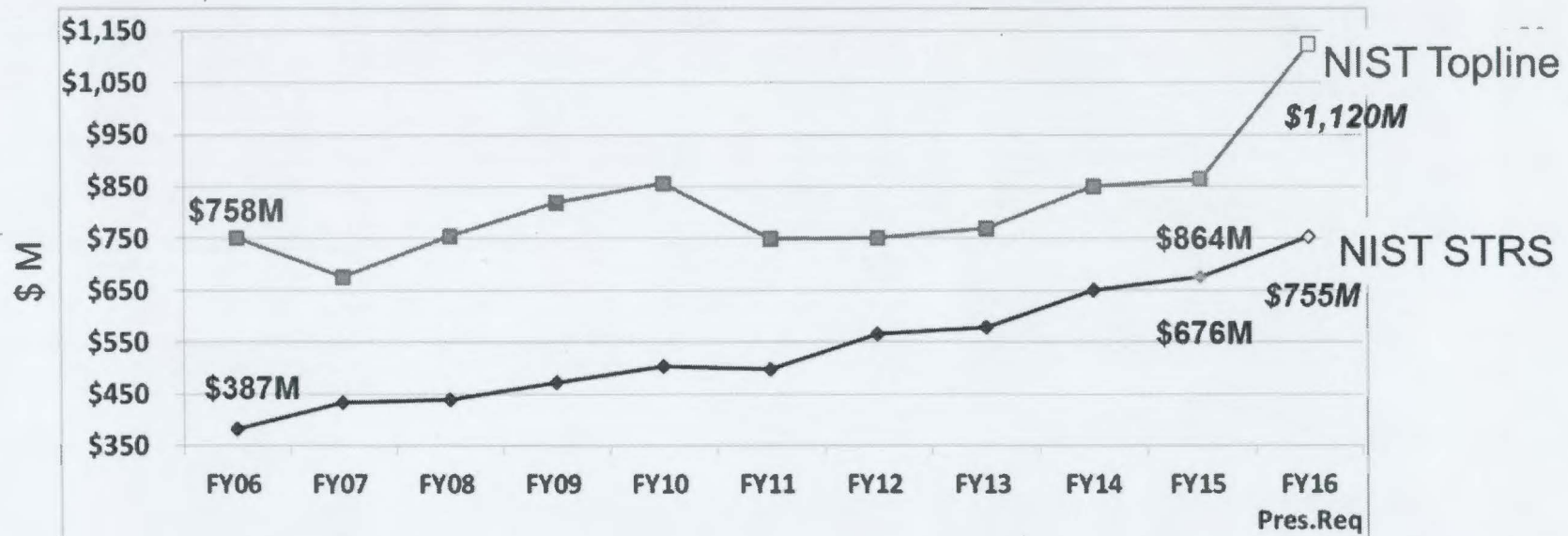
## OPM Data Breaches - Cont'd

- There is no information at this time to suggest misuse of the information that was stolen from OPM's systems.
  
- E-QIP username and passwords were stolen.
  - It's recommended that you change passwords/usernames if commonly used.
  
- Breaches continue to be under investigation.
  
- OPM is working aggressively to strengthen cybersecurity across all of its information systems.
  
- Online information resources regarding OPM breaches:
  - <https://www.opm.gov/cybersecurity>
  - <https://connection.commerce.gov/collection/opm-cybersecurity-incident>
  - <https://inet.nist.gov/pao/news/latest-information-opm-cybersecurity-incident>

## OPM Data Breaches - Cont'd

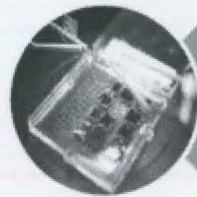
- **NIST's cybersecurity program has layers of defenses to protect this type of information stored in NIST information systems.**
  - Threats are constantly changing.
  - There are many lessons to be learned from these breaches.
  
- **White House Cybersecurity Sprint effort to identify high priority government-wide improvements is nearly complete.**
  - Implementing resulting requirements will strengthen our cybersecurity program.
  
- **Things you can do today:**
  - Use your PIV card to log into your computer.
  - Only use authorized online internet services.
  - Be suspicious of unsolicited email messages, phone calls, or texts and phishing attempts.
  - Do not send personally identifiable or other sensitive information through email without encryption.

# President's FY 2016 Budget Request



**Scientific and Technical Research and Services \$754.7 M (+\$79.2 M)**

Strengthens efforts in many areas of national importance



**Industrial Technology Services \$306.0 M (+\$167.9 M)**

Requests funds to establish NNMI and continues support for MEP and AMTech



**Construction of Research Facilities \$59.0 M (+\$8.7 M)**

Sustains funding for facilities and provides an increase for safety, capacity, maintenance, and major repair



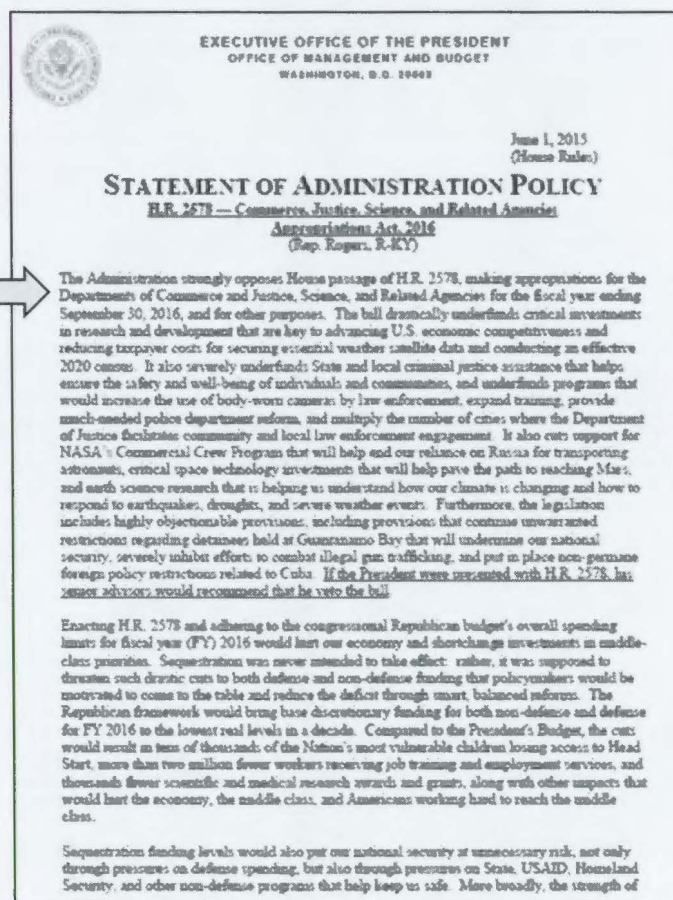
## Status of NIST FY16 Budget Request (Dollars in millions)

	FY 2015 Enacted	FY 2016 President's Request	FY2016 House CJS Mark	House Mark +/- Over FY 16 Request	FY2016 Senate CJS Mark	Senate Mark +/- Over FY 16 Request
<b>STRS</b>	<b>\$675.5</b>	<b>\$754.7</b>	<b>\$675.0</b>	<b>(\$79.7)</b>	<b>\$684.7</b>	<b>(\$70.0)</b>
Laboratory Programs	591.3	661.6	TBD	N/A	TBD	N/A
Corporate Services	17.3	16.9	TBD	N/A	TBD	N/A
Stds Coord & Special Pgrms	66.9	76.2	TBD	N/A	TBD	N/A
<b>ITS</b>	<b>\$138.1</b>	<b>\$306.0</b>	<b>\$130.0</b>	<b>(\$176.0)</b>	<b>\$145.0</b>	<b>(\$161.0)</b>
Advanced Mfg Tech Consortia	8.1	15.0	0.0	(15.0)	15.0	0.0
Hollings Mfg Ext Partnership	130.0	141.0	130.0	(11.0)	130.0	(11.0)
Nat'l Network for Mfg Innovation	0.0	150.0	0.0	(150.0)	0.0	(150.0)
<b>CRF</b>	<b>\$50.3</b>	<b>\$59.0</b>	<b>\$50.0</b>	<b>(\$9.0)</b>	<b>\$63.3</b>	<b>\$4.3</b>
<b>Total, NIST Discretionary</b>	<b>863.9</b>	<b>1,119.7</b>	<b>855.0</b>	<b>(264.7)</b>	<b>893.0</b>	<b>(226.7)</b>

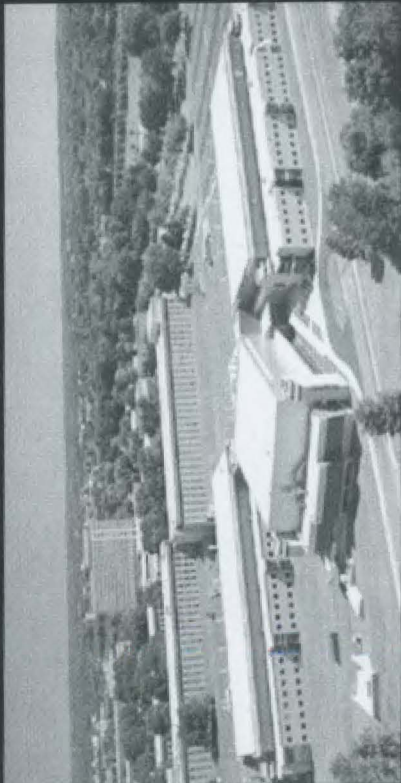
<sup>17</sup> National Network for Manufacturing Innovation is a newly proposed program in FY 2016

# Administration Response to House Passage of H.R. 2578 – Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2016

**“The Administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 2578, ... The bill drastically underfunds critical investments in research and development that are key to advancing ...”**



**Beginning the year on a  
Continuing Resolution is a near certainty**



**Gaithersburg, MD**  
**62 buildings; 578 acres**

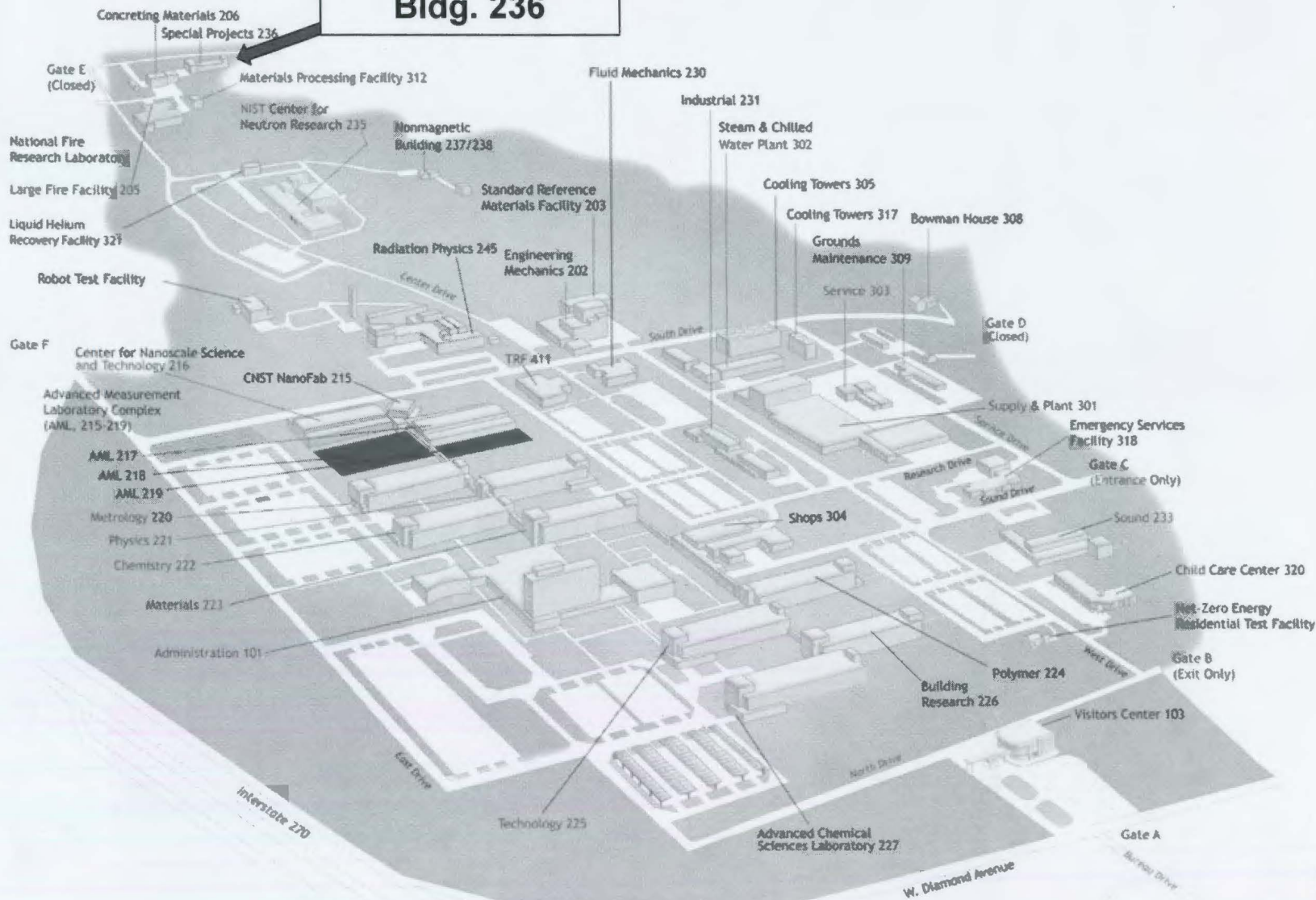


Photo by D.J. Atkinson

**Boulder, CO**  
**26 buildings; 208 acres**

# NIST Gaithersburg Campus Map

**Special Projects  
Bldg. 236**



[Return](#)

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 10:08 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail (gail.porter@nist.gov)  
**Subject:** FW: New Washington Post story on Bldg. 236

NBC 4 also had an update this morning, but looks like the only thing new is that the FBI is in on the investigation: <http://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/FBI-to-Lead-Investigation-into-Blast-at-Federal-Facility-That-Could-Be-Tied-to-Manufacture-of-Drugs-319696001.html>

Jim was surprised at how quickly the committee shared info with the Post.

[Congressional committee probes possible meth making at federal lab](#)

By [Dan Morse](#) July 29 at 5:22 PM

A congressional oversight committee has launched an inquiry into possible meth production at a government lab in Maryland and is seeking building access records to track the movements of a former employee, congressional staffers said Wednesday.

The employee, who served as a police lieutenant at the sprawling campus of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, resigned July 19, the day after he was injured during an explosion inside a NIST building. The incident happened about 7 p.m. on a Saturday while he was on duty. Officials said that chemicals found at the scene were consistent with the manufacture of methamphetamine, or meth, a highly addictive street drug.

The officer, who had recently served a brief term as acting police chief of NIST's Gaithersburg campus, has not been charged. The FBI is leading a criminal investigation.

Separately, the U.S. Congressional Committee on Science, Space and Technology received a briefing Wednesday about the incident from NIST director Willie May. He indicated that whatever happened hadn't been going on very long, said Zachary Kurz, a spokesman for the committee. May declined to say whether NIST had determined whether the former lieutenant was making meth, saying that matter is under investigation by law enforcement agencies outside of NIST, according to Kurz.

[\[Chemicals at lab explosion consistent with meth making\]](#)

In a statement Wednesday, committee chairman Lamar S. Smith (R-Tex.) said he was troubled by what he knew so far — particularly that the subject of the investigation served as a high-ranking NIST police officer.

“Even Hollywood couldn't have imagined this plot twist,” Smith said. “As the science committee expands its investigation, it is becoming clear we must better monitor those with access to our nation's high-tech research facilities.”

NIST, a branch of the U.S. Department of Commerce, normally makes news for its high-level research. Among their other pursuits, scientists there have earned several Nobel prizes for their study of atomic physics.

According to a committee aide, two members of NIST's police force were on duty the night of July 18, when an explosion erupted inside a room in Building 236, which is reserved for special projects and sits on the southern edge of the 578-acre campus. The room in question was not being used for any active NIST research, a spokeswoman for the institute said, and was designed as a place to conduct “combustion research.” The explosion didn't damage the structure, she said. The windows, which were designed not to shatter, were blown out whole and fell to the ground.

The explosion set off a heat alarm. NIST firefighters and at least one other NIST police officer responded. They found the lieutenant, who initially said he was trying to fill a butane lighter, according to the committee aide and a law enforcement official with knowledge of the case.

The lieutenant, who had worked for NIST for about 13 years, was treated and released from a local trauma center.

Smith, the committee chairman, wants to get data on the former lieutenant's movements at NIST, perhaps via electronic lock records, so that his committee's staff can determine how much time the officer had spent in Building 236 in recent months. Smith also wants to know what kind of background checks NIST conducts before hiring police officers.

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027  
[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 2:50 PM  
**To:** Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Porter, Gail; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Wilkinson, Richard  
**Subject:** RE: Town Hall All-Staff

The slides from this morning's Town Hall are now available on inet:  
<https://inet.nist.gov/pao/information-bldg-236-incident>

We're also working on an internal article that summarizes the Town Hall. We'll circulate draft text as soon as it's available with the goal of posting it early next week.

Thank you,

-Jason

**From:** Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 9:01 AM  
**To:** Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.; Porter, Gail; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: Town Hall All-Staff Reminder Email

Thank you. If anyone has changes, please let me know by 9:15.

-Jason

**From:** Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 8:58 AM  
**To:** Stoughton, Jason C.; Porter, Gail; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: Town Hall All-Staff Reminder Email

I agree that a reminder is appropriate.

This text looks fine to me.

Rich

**From:** Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 8:34 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail <[gail.porter@nist.gov](mailto:gail.porter@nist.gov)>; May, Willie E. Dr. <[willie.may@nist.gov](mailto:willie.may@nist.gov)>; Spurrier, Mark G <[mark.spurrier@nist.gov](mailto:mark.spurrier@nist.gov)>; Saunders, Mary H. <[mary.saunders@nist.gov](mailto:mary.saunders@nist.gov)>; Kayser, Richard F.

<[richard.kayser@nist.gov](mailto:richard.kayser@nist.gov)>; Wixon, Henry N. <[henry.wixon@nist.gov](mailto:henry.wixon@nist.gov)>; Kimball, Kevin A. <[kevin.kimball@nist.gov](mailto:kevin.kimball@nist.gov)>; Salber, Stephen S. <[stephen.salber@nist.gov](mailto:stephen.salber@nist.gov)>; Schufreider, James R. <[jim.schufreider@nist.gov](mailto:jim.schufreider@nist.gov)>; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr. <[richard.cavanagh@nist.gov](mailto:richard.cavanagh@nist.gov)>  
Cc: Huergo, Jennifer <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)>  
Subject: Town Hall All-Staff Reminder Email

It think it's a good idea to send out a reminder about the Town Hall today via all-staff email.

Does the copy below still look correct to everyone? It's nearly identical to the all-staff email we sent on July 24.

Thank you,

-Jason

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**SUBJECT:**

Reminder: Director's Town Hall Today at 11 a.m. EDT

**BODY:**

**A reminder that NIST Director Willie May will hold a Town Hall today, Thursday, July 30, at 11 a.m. EDT in the Gaithersburg Red Auditorium. Video teleconferencing will be available to NIST Boulder's auditorium and to Room B120 at the Hollings Marine Laboratory.**

The Town Hall will focus on the recent explosion in Building 236 and news media reports that it may have been connected to making the drug methamphetamine, a controlled substance.

May will explain actions NIST is taking in response to the incident and answer questions from staff. May has directed that Bldg. 236 be vacated and secured.

"This building is located at the extreme edge of the campus and there have been few active research projects in recent years in the space," said May. "For the time being, until our security procedures can be reviewed, I've asked Acting Associate Director for Laboratory Programs Rich Cavanagh to personally review and approve any necessary use of the space in Bldg. 236."

He will also discuss plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help NIST as it considers changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

Following the Bldg. 236 discussion, May and other senior NIST leaders will discuss implications for NIST and NIST employees from the recent cybersecurity breaches at the Office of Personnel Management.

For additional information, the Director's Office has created an [internal webpage](#) with updated information about the Bldg. 236 explosion and related activities.

---

**From:** Stoughton, Jason C.

**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 10:28 AM

**To:** Porter, Gail; May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.

**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer

**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls



- NIST News item is live: <https://inet.nist.gov/pao/news/town-hall-discuss-building-236-explosion-and-opm-breaches>
- Info page is live: <https://inet.nist.gov/pao/information-bldg-236-incident>
- Director's Office homepage (with link to info page): <https://inet.nist.gov/do>
- All-staff email has been sent.
- Calendar event for Town Hall is live.

-Jason

**From:** Porter, Gail

**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 9:30 AM

**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.; Spurrier, Mark G; Saunders, Mary H.; Kayser, Richard F.; Wixon, Henry N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Salber, Stephen S.; Schufreider, James R.; Cavanagh, Richard R Dr.

**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer; Stoughton, Jason C.

**Subject:** RE: Assistance with Media Calls

We will be sending out the Town Hall invite to all staff and will post the attached internal news article shortly. A few areas where minor edits were made are highlighted.

Thanks. Gail

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 5:03 PM  
**To:** 'tragerr@rsc.org'  
**Subject:** NIST info

Hi Rebecca,  
Here's the statement:

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory room on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident and then requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. MCPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is leading a joint investigation of the incident. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

Jennifer

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027  
[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** allstaff@nist.gov on behalf of Willie May <willie.may@nist.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 31, 2015 9:52 AM  
**To:** ALLSTAFF  
**Subject:** Follow Up to Yesterday's Town Hall

Colleagues -

At yesterday's Town Hall meeting, I characterized the Gaithersburg Building 236 incident as a "near miss." I was striving to put the incident in the larger context of the efficacy of the current security posture on our Gaithersburg campus. Perhaps the term "wake-up call" would have been a better choice than "near miss," but the bottom line is the same: we've learned from this incident that we need to strengthen our security posture, and to that end, we will be taking the steps I shared with you.

Also at the meeting, a staff member pointed out that the incident was not a "near miss" from a safety perspective (see definitions below): an employee suffered injuries requiring treatment at a local trauma center. I couldn't agree more that the incident was not a safety "near miss," and I am grateful to this individual for raising the issue so I can try to clarify my intentions.

OFPM will be posting the initial incident report in NIST's Incident Reporting and Investigation System (IRIS) soon, and OSHA will be recording the incident on NIST's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Injury and Illness Log for calendar year 2015.

Public and Business Affairs has already posted the slides that I used for my discussions. They can be accessed at: <https://inet.nist.gov/pao/information-bldg-236-incident>

Have a safe and enjoyable weekend all!

WEM

### Definitions from the NIST Incident Reporting and Investigation Suborder:

- **Incident** - A work-related event in which any of the following, individually or in combination, occurred or could have occurred: an injury or illness; an unauthorized spill or release of hazardous or regulated material to the environment; damage or loss of equipment or property. The "could have occurred" situation corresponds to a "near miss."

- **Near Miss** - Also known as a "near hit," "near-accident," or "close call," an incident that did not result in any of the following, either individually or in combination, but had a plausible likelihood of doing so: a work-related injury or illness; a spill or release of hazardous or regulated material to the environment; damage or loss of equipment or property.

**Willie E. May, Ph.D.**

Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology &  
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology

100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1000  
Gaithersburg, MD 20899  
301/975-2300

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Friday, July 31, 2015 11:01 AM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Re: corrected story

Thanks for following up on this.

Gail Porter  
301 975 3392 work  
301 367 7385 cell

On Jul 31, 2015, at 10:41 AM, "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)> wrote:

For you media report, chad:

We contacted Chemistry World for corrections to their article on the explosion in Bldg. 236. They made the corrections.

<http://www.rsc.org/chemistryworld/2015/07/government-science-institute-nist-ex-police-chief-linked-meth-lab>

\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027  
[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)

<image001.png><image002.jpg><image003.png><image004.jpg><image005.png>

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** NIST Safety <SharePoint@nist.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 03, 2015 8:58 AM  
**To:** shedweb  
**Subject:** INCIDENT REPORT: Explosion in Building 236

The following incident report has been posted to the NIST IRIS website:

**INCIDENT TITLE** Explosion in Building 236  
**CASE NO.** 15-IG-0142  
**INCIDENT TYPE** Injury

**REPORTING ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT** (19) Office of Facilities and Property Management  
**LOCATION** NIST-Gaithersburg  
**DATE/TIME OF INCIDENT** 7/18/2015 7:00 PM

### DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

*Activity leading up to and/or taking place at the time of the incident:*

Undetermined at this time.

*Immediate impact of the incident:*

Employee received burns to arms and face.

*Immediate measures taken to respond to the incident:*

NIST emergency response personnel responded; employee was transported to hospital. The building was secured.

To view all incident reports, [click here](#).

To update your subscription preferences, [click here](#).

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 05, 2015 8:35 AM  
**To:** Dimeo, Robert M; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: Reactor security Q&As

Rob:

Thanks for sending these Qs and As. To date we have not had questions about the NCNR facility in relation to the Bldg. 236 explosion. However, we'll be sure to let you know if we do and we appreciate having these in hand.

Gail

Gail Porter  
Director  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
(301) 975-3392 office  
(301) 367-7385 cell  
gail.porter@nist.gov  
Follow NIST on



**From:** Dimeo, Robert M  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 04, 2015 10:48 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail; Kimball, Kevin A.  
**Subject:** Reactor security Q&As

Gail & Kevin,

In light of the recent incident in the Special Projects Building, I drafted the attached set of Q & As in case there are any public inquiries about reactor security.

Rob

Robert Dimeo, Director  
**NIST Center for Neutron Research**  
100 Bureau Drive, MS 6100  
Gaithersburg, MD, 20899  
301.975.6210  
[www.ncnr.nist.gov](http://www.ncnr.nist.gov)

DRAFT-DRAFT-DRAFT

8/24/2015 1:59 PM 7/21/2015 8:37 PM

**Qs and As (Responsive Only)**

**July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department (MDPD) is underway. The Drug Enforcement Administration is jointly working with MCPD on the investigation. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

A1. The laboratory room where the explosion occurred has previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

**Q2. Was the explosion caused by a research project or equipment malfunction?**

A2. The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts taking place occurring in the specific laboratory room where this explosion occurred. A Montgomery County Police Department led investigation is underway that is expected to determine the cause of the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

A3. The affected lab room and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No hazardous materials were detected.

**Q4. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

A4. The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery Police Department and Fire and Rescue Service. The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently made the decision to investigate. NIST agrees with that decision and fully supports their efforts. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the country to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q5. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

A5. On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

The explosion on Saturday, July 18, was not related to the earlier situation.

**Commented [SMH1]:** Need to clarify here when DEA was brought in and by whom – I assume by MCPD and on Saturday night or Sunday morning since it was a DEA team that removed items from the lab. See comments later in the Q and A too.

**Commented [SMH2]:** There are multiple investigators involved, from DEA, FBI and the DOC IG, so this seems like a better characterization

**Commented [SMH3]:** Specify when and by whom DEA was called in here too



DRAFT-DRAFT-DRAFT

8/24/2015 1:59 PM 7/21/2015 8:37 PM

**Q6. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

A6. The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the Drug Enforcement Agency. The lab has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q7. Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

A7. No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q8. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A8. NIST police officers have access to most rooms at NIST as part of their responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property.

**Q9. What security procedures are in place to make sure that laboratories are only used in approved ways?**

A9. The great majority of NIST laboratory spaces are in active use daily. NIST holds regular safety inspections and requires hazard reviews for every approved activity in every laboratory. Individual laboratories have either key or digital keypad locks and each has staff members responsible for keeping it in compliance with safety and security policies.

**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. Yes.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A11. The safety of the NIST Center of Neutron Research was not reduced. The officer's responsibilities did not include the building that houses the NIST Center for Neutron Research.

**Q12. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

A24. The NIST Police Services group has been authorized by statute for more than 15 years and operates under a delegation of authority from the Department of Homeland Security. NIST works closely with the Department's Office of Security to ensure that security procedures and policies in place are consistent with Department and government requirements.

**Q13. Who's in charge of the investigation?**

A25. The Montgomery County Police Department is conducting the investigation, working jointly with the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

In addition, NIST will conduct a review with its research managers to ensure that current protocols are being uniformly implemented to ensure appropriate use and security of laboratory spaces.

DRAFT-DRAFT-DRAFT

8/24/2015 1:59 PM 7/21/2015 8:37 PM

If charges are filed and the employee is named.

**Q15. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A13. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

Q16. A Montgomery County Police Department led investigation is underway.

**Qs and As (Responsive Only)**  
**July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department (MDPD) is underway. The Drug Enforcement Administration is jointly working with MCPD on the investigation. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

**A1.** The laboratory room where the explosion occurred has previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

**Q2. Was the explosion caused by a research project or equipment malfunction?**

**A2.** The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts occurring in the specific laboratory room when this explosion occurred. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway that is expected to determine the cause of the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

**A3.** The affected lab room and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No hazardous materials were detected.

**Q4. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

**A4.** The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery Police Department and Fire and Rescue Service. The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently made the decision to investigate. NIST agrees with that decision and fully supports their efforts. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the country to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q5. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

**A5.** On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

The explosion on Saturday, July 18, was not related to the earlier situation.

**Q6. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

A6. The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the Drug Enforcement Agency. The lab has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q7. Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

A7. No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q8. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A8. NIST police officers have access to most rooms at NIST as part of their responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property.

**Q9. What security procedures are in place to make sure that laboratories are only used in approved ways?**

A9. The great majority of NIST laboratory spaces are in active use daily. NIST holds regular safety inspections and requires hazard reviews for every approved activity in every laboratory. Individual laboratories have either key or digital keypad locks and each has staff members responsible for keeping it in compliance with safety and security policies.

**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. Yes.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A11. The safety of the NIST Center of Neutron Research was not reduced. The officer's responsibilities did not include the building that houses the NIST Center for Neutron Research.

**Q12. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

A24. The NIST Police Services group has been authorized by statute for more than 15 years and operates under a delegation of authority from the Department of Homeland Security.

**Q13. Who's in charge of the investigation?**

A25. The Montgomery County Police Department is conducting the investigation, working jointly with the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security staffing, processes and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

In addition, NIST will conduct a review with its research managers to ensure that current protocols are being uniformly implemented to ensure appropriate use and security of laboratory spaces.

DRAFT-DRAFT-DRAFT

8/24/2015 2:01 PM

**If charges are filed and the employee is named.**

**Q15. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A13. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q.16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

Q16. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

**Qs and As (Responsive Only)**  
**July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident with the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. An investigation by Montgomery County Police Department (MDPD) is underway. The Drug Enforcement Administration is jointly working with MCPD on the investigation. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

(The following details have been provided to the press in response to direct questions and therefore are not included in the Qs and As: The injured officer's position as a Supervising Police Officer and rank of lieutenant; that he was released from the hospital July 19; that he resigned effective July 19)

**Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

**A1.** The laboratory has previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to his incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

**Q2. Was the explosion caused by a research project or equipment malfunction?**

**A2.** The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, there were no research efforts occurring in the lab when this explosion occurred. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway that is expected to determine the cause of the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

**A3.** The affected lab and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No hazardous materials were detected.

**Q4. What was the security officer doing at the time of the explosion?**

**A4.** A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway that we hope will help determine that.

**Q5. Did his actions somehow trigger the explosion?**

**A5.** A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

**Q6. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

**A6.** The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery Police Department and Fire and Rescue Service. The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently made the decision to investigate. NIST agrees with that decision and fully supports their efforts. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the country to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q7. Do you suspect a criminal act?**

A7. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

**Q8. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

A8. On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

The explosion on Saturday, July 18, was not related to the earlier situation.

**Q9. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

A9. The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the Drug Enforcement Agency. The lab has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q10. When was the explosion first noticed? How was it reported?**

A10. NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm in the building at approximately 7 p.m., Saturday, July 18.

**Q11. Did someone try to create methamphetamines or another drug in a NIST laboratory?**

A11. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

**Q12. Where did the chemicals used in the alleged meth lab come from? Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

A12. We have no confirmation of what chemicals were found in the lab after the explosion. No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q13. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A13. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q14. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A14. NIST police officers have access to most rooms at NIST as part of their responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property.

**Q15. What security procedures are in place to make sure that laboratories are only used in approved ways?**

A15. The great majority of NIST laboratory spaces are in active use daily. NIST holds regular safety inspections and requires hazard reviews for every approved activity in every laboratory. Individual laboratories have either key or digital keypad locks and each has staff members responsible for keeping it in compliance with safety and security policies. This particular lab was being transitioned to support new research project needs, and NIST staff members had been actively cleaning out the facility and inspecting it monthly.

**Q16. Were others on the NIST campus involved in this illegal activity?**

A16. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

**Q17. What made the responding officers suspect illegal activity?**

A17. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

**Q18. Was anyone other than the injured officer at the lab at the time of the explosion?**

A18. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

**Q19. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A19. Yes.

**Q20. If so, who was covering his normal duties? Why didn't anyone notice he was missing? Or were they covering for him?**

A20. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

**Q21. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A21. The officer's responsibilities did not include the building that houses the NIST Center for Neutron Research.

**Q22. If the NIST Police Department responded to the explosion could they have altered the scene prior to Montgomery County police officers arriving?**

A22. A Montgomery County Police Department investigation is underway.

**Q23. Do Montgomery County police always respond to NIST incidents like this or did you ask them to respond?**

A23. NIST police and fire services responded immediately to the alarm. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery County Police Department and Fire and Rescue Service. The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently made the decision to investigate.

NIST agrees with that decision and fully supports their efforts. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the country to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q24. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

A24. The NIST Police Services group has been authorized by statute for more than 15 years and operates under a delegation of authority from the Department of Homeland Security.

**Q25. Who's in charge of the investigation?**

A25. The Montgomery County Police Department is conducting the investigation, working jointly with the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.



## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Sent:** Monday, July 27, 2015 8:56 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** RE: Email to Willie

Will do. I'll change those two things and send. Will Cc you, Jennifer and Kevin.

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Monday, July 27, 2015 8:55 AM  
**To:** Stoughton, Jason C.  
**Cc:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Re: Email to Willie

Yes. Looks good. Thanks. Please send and take out draft in the file name. Also I think the page prints with draft across the page. Please remove the watermark as well.

Gail Porter  
301 975 3392 work  
301 367 7385 cell

On Jul 27, 2015, at 8:48 AM, "Stoughton, Jason C." <[jason.stoughton@nist.gov](mailto:jason.stoughton@nist.gov)> wrote:

The document titled 'Bldg 236\_July 2015\_DRAFT\_July22\_Final.docx' does not mention the FBI (it was the most recent document).

I made the following edits (also in the attached file). Will send to Willie ASAP if this looks right to you:

-----  
**ORIGINAL (intro):**

MCPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and is now working jointly with DEA to investigate the incident. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**NEW:**

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident and then requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. MCPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is leading a joint investigation of the incident. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

-----  
**ORIGINAL (A2):**

A joint Montgomery County Police Department/ U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration investigation is underway to determine the cause and circumstances for the explosion.

**NEW:**

A joint investigation led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and including the Montgomery County Police Department and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration is underway to determine the cause and circumstances for the explosion.

-----  
**ORIGINAL (A4):**

The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently requested assistance from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). A joint investigation by MCPD and DEA is now underway.

**NEW:**

The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently requested assistance from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). A joint investigation led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation is now underway.

-----  
**ORIGINAL (A13):**

The Montgomery County Police Department is conducting the investigation, working jointly with the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**NEW:**

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is leading the investigation, working jointly with the Montgomery County Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

-----  
**ORIGINAL (A16):**

A Montgomery County Police Department-led investigation is underway.

**NEW:**

An FBI-led investigation is underway.  
-----

-----Original Message-----

From: Porter, Gail  
Sent: Monday, July 27, 2015 8:34 AM  
To: Stoughton, Jason C.  
Subject: Re: Email to Willie

Okay.

Gail Porter  
301 975 3392 work  
301 367 7385 cell

> On Jul 27, 2015, at 8:33 AM, "Stoughton, Jason C." <jason.stoughton@nist.gov> wrote:

>

> Susie can access it. Opening it now...

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Porter, Gail  
> Sent: Monday, July 27, 2015 8:32 AM  
> To: Stoughton, Jason C.  
> Subject: Re: Email to Willie

>

> Try Sharon Seide or Robin. You need access. Thanks.

>  
> Gail Porter  
> 301 975 3392 work  
> 301 367 7385 cell  
>  
>> On Jul 27, 2015, at 8:29 AM, "Stoughton, Jason C." <jason.stoughton@nist.gov> wrote:  
>>  
>> Gail,  
>>  
>> (b)(6) I don't have access to the 'Qs&Aa\_media' folder on the O drive ('access denied'). I'll see who's here that might have access and see if I can get it from someone else. Will let you know.  
>>  
>> -Jason  
>>  
>> -----Original Message-----  
>> From: Porter, Gail  
>> Sent: Monday, July 27, 2015 8:25 AM  
>> To: Stoughton, Jason C.  
>> Cc: Huergo, Jennifer; King, Becky; Jones, Ann Marie  
>> Subject: Email to Willie  
>>  
>> Jason:  
>> I'm going to have to come in a bit late this morning. (b)(6)  
>> (b)(6)  
>>  
>> In the meantime, Willie needs the final bldg 236 q and a from the o drive. Should be in the folder O://media/Qs&asmedia/bldg236 explosion.  
>>  
>> Please take a look at the document and make sure it includes that the FBI is leading. If it looks good then please send to Willie with cc's to Kevin, Jennifer, and I.  
>> Thanks,  
>>  
>> Gail Porter  
>> 301 975 3392 work  
>> 301 367 7385 cell  
<Bldg 236\_Qs&As\_July27.docx>

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 28, 2015 6:30 PM  
**To:** May, Willie E. Dr.  
**Cc:** Kimball, Kevin A.; Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Possible questions at the Town Hall  
**Attachments:** Bldg 236\_QsAs\_July27.docx

Willie:

In addition to the Qs and As we've already prepared that are attached, below are the questions that we came up with in Public Affairs based on your draft slides for the Town Hall.

Unfortunately, I will not be at the Town Hall. (b)(6)

(b)(6) Jennifer will be answering press call for us during those two days on this topic.

Hope everything goes well. Gail

### Questions we may get from staff:

1. Why is the FBI now leading the investigation? Does this mean that the incident is even more serious than we originally thought?
2. Given what has happened, how can we trust the NIST police force to adhere to any new patrol procedures?
3. What did our Emergency Services staff do that is being commended?
4. Will there be ground rules for how these new cameras will be used? Same question for the building swipe for access logs. Sound a little like Big Brother.
5. Will these new rules about chemical inventories mean more paperwork. I already have so much paperwork I can't get anything done.
6. Can you give us examples of what types of out of the ordinary activities you want us to report? Who do we report these activities to?
7. OPM has already lost all of my data – twice -- why should I give any data to their private sector contractor?
8. Slide 7 – How would you know if the stolen data had been misused?
9. If the OPM cyber attack had happened at NIST would it have been successful?
10. What are "authorized online Internet services?"

Prepared: July 27, 2015 -- FINAL  
Contact: Gail Porter, 301-975-3392

**Qs and As (Responsive Only)**  
**July 18, 2015, explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236**

At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory room on the NIST campus in Bldg. 236. A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released. The officer has since resigned, effective July 19.

The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident and then requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments. MCPD, in turn, requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is leading a joint investigation of the incident. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q1. What kind of research occurs in the building where this happened?**

**A1.** This building is reserved for conducting research that involves more hazardous conditions than can be conducted safely in a multi-story, multi-purpose research building.

The laboratory room where the explosion occurred had previously been used for combustion research. That research has been phased out and the laboratory was being cleared out in preparation for its transition to meet new project needs. Prior to this incident occurring, all chemicals previously used there had been removed and properly disposed.

**Q2. Was the explosion caused by a NIST research project or equipment malfunction?**

**A2.** The explosion was not caused by a NIST research project. The facility in which the explosion occurred is designated as a research laboratory, however, at the time of the incident there were no research efforts taking place in the specific laboratory room where this explosion occurred. A joint investigation led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and including the Montgomery County Police Department and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration is underway to determine the cause and circumstances for the explosion.

**Q3. Were any hazardous materials released that could endanger other staff or nearby neighborhoods?**

**A3.** The affected lab room and other areas inside and outside of Building 236 were evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment. No significant hazardous conditions were detected.

**Q4. Why are the police and not fire or safety officials investigating?**

**A4.** The NIST police and fire services responded immediately to an alarm from Bldg. 236 at about 7 p.m. Saturday, July 18. Based on their assessment of the scene, they requested assistance from the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments.

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The Montgomery County Police Department subsequently requested assistance from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). A joint investigation led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation is now underway.

NIST fully supports their efforts and is providing assistance as needed. NIST has a Memorandum of Understanding with the country to provide mutual police and fire support when necessary.

**Q5. Didn't NIST just have a hazardous incident in May? Was this explosion in the same lab or somehow related? Or similar?**

A5. The explosion on Saturday July 18<sup>th</sup> was not related to any ongoing NIST research project.

*If background about the previous hazardous incident is needed:* On May 5, 2015, NIST and Montgomery County emergency crews responded to a potential chemical hazard in a different NIST laboratory that resulted from a research project. That potential hazard was effectively resolved with the help of the Montgomery County Fire Department. No one was injured or exposed to hazardous materials.

**Q6. Has the lab been cleaned up? Is it dangerous to the current occupants?**

A6. The laboratory was cleaned up by the Montgomery County Police Department, with the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. The laboratory room where the explosion happened, as well as the surrounding area, has also been evaluated by NIST's Office of Safety, Health and Environment, which detected no hazardous materials.

**Q7. Are there chemicals missing from the NIST inventory?**

A7. No chemicals in NIST's inventory have been reported missing.

**Q8. Why would a police officer have access to this laboratory space?**

A8. NIST police officers have the responsibility to respond to emergencies and to protect NIST employees, facilities, equipment and property, and as such they have access to most of the rooms on campus

**Q9. What security procedures are in place to make sure that laboratories are only used in approved ways?**

A9. The great majority of NIST laboratory spaces are in active use daily. NIST holds regular safety inspections and requires hazard reviews for every approved activity in every laboratory. Individual laboratories have either key or digital keypad locks and each has staff members responsible for keeping it in compliance with safety and security policies.

**Q10. Was the officer on duty at the time?**

A10. Yes.

**Q11. Was the safety of the NIST nuclear reactor reduced during the time he was in the lab and away from his normal duties?**

A11. The safety of the NIST Center of Neutron Research was not reduced.

**Q12. Why does NIST have its own police force? As a research institution, does NIST have the capacity to properly manage a police force?**

A24. The 578-acre (234 hectare) NIST Gaithersburg campus includes 62 specialized research buildings and requires a police force trained to provide security in that specialized environment. NIST works closely with the Department of Commerce Office of Security to ensure that security procedures and policies in place are consistent with Department and government requirements.

**Q13. Who's in charge of the investigation?**

A13. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is leading the investigation, working jointly with the Montgomery County Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration. NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.

**Q 14. What is NIST doing to mitigate against events like this happening in the future?**

A14. NIST plans to identify several external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus and will ask them to conduct independent, individual reviews of NIST's current security posture, including staffing, processes, policies and procedures. Their recommendations will help guide NIST in making any necessary changes to strengthen NIST's security posture.

In addition, NIST will conduct a review with its research managers to ensure that current protocols are being uniformly implemented to ensure appropriate use and security of laboratory spaces.

**If charges are filed and the employee is named.**

**Q15. How long has this officer been on the NIST Police force? What was his title?**

A13. The officer worked at NIST from Jan. 28, 2002, to July 19, 2015. His title at the time of resignation was Supervisory Police Officer with a rank of lieutenant.

**Q.16. If questions are asked about events during the incident or that ask NIST to draw conclusions about whether a criminal activity occurred on the campus?**

A16. An FBI-led investigation is underway.

## Huergo, Jennifer

---

**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 10:25 AM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Subject:** RE: Town Hall  
**Attachments:** WEM NIST Town Hall Meeting 23 Mar 2015 final.pptx

Willie is fine with it not being recorded. Sharon already got that question from Boulder so she'll explain that because it's mostly a Q&A it won't be recorded because we don't record those.

What about posting the slides after? Willie said he'd trust our judgement but doesn't want it to look like we are hiding anything. I think now that the slides have been cleared by FBI/MCPD and the committee has shared even more than that with the Post, it would be good to have them available internally for the many people who will miss today's session. Are you ok with that?

Jennifer

---

**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 10:04 AM  
**To:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Re: Town Hall

(b)(6)

Haven't seen Post story. Can you send?

Ellen asked me about recording and I said no because it will likely be sensitive and FOIAble. Kevin and Willie should be consulted if possible.

Gail Porter  
301 975 3392 work  
301 367 7385 cell

On Jul 30, 2015, at 10:00 AM, "Huergo, Jennifer" <[jennifer.huergo@nist.gov](mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov)> wrote:

Hi Gail,

(b)(6) The question came up about recording today's session (Laura said most in Boulder will assume they can watch it later). I'm assuming you and Willie decided against it because it is a sensitive topic and he wants people to feel free to ask (and we don't normally record Qs and As). But should he be prepared to answer the why not question if asked during the Q&A?

I'm guessing he'll want to put the slides on the internal network—we cleared them through the FBI and MCPD so there is nothing in them that couldn't go out. Plus the science committee has pretty much told the Post everything in them and more.

What do you think?  
Jennifer



\*\*\*\*\*

Jennifer Huergo  
Director of Media Relations  
Public Affairs Office  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Office: (301) 975-6343  
Cell: (202) 309-1027  
[Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov)

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# **NIST Town Hall Meeting**

**July 30, 2015**

**Red Auditorium in Gaithersburg**

*with Video Teleconference to Boulder and Charleston*

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**Dr. Willie E. May**

**NIST Director**

**and**

**Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology**

**National Institute of  
Standards and Technology**

**NIST**  
National Institute of  
Standards and Technology

# Topics

- **Explosion in Building 236 ...**
  - *and actions NIST is taking in response to the incident*
  
- **OPM Data Breach(es)...**
  - *and implications for NIST and NIST employees*
  
- **FY16 Budget Update**
  
- **Questions and Discussion**



## Building 236 Incident

- **At about 7:00 pm Saturday, July 18, an explosion occurred in a laboratory room in Bldg. 236.**
  - A member of the NIST security force assigned to the campus suffered non-life threatening injuries, was treated at a local trauma center, and was subsequently released.
  - The incident is under investigation due to the presence of what appeared to be drug manufacturing evidence.
  - The officer resigned from Federal Service, effective July 19.
  
- **The NIST Police and Fire Departments responded to the incident and then requested the assistance of the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments.**
  - We thank the Montgomery County Police and Fire Departments (MCPD) for their professional response to this incident.
  - MCPD requested the assistance of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.
  - The Federal Bureau of Investigation is now leading the investigation and is working jointly with MCPD, DEA and DoC OIG.
  - NIST is cooperating fully with the investigation and providing any assistance as needed.
  - **External Investigators have commended NIST Emergency Services staff for their actions immediately following the explosion.**

## Saturday, July 18, 2015: Timeline of Events

- **6:42 p.m.**
  - A Heat Alarm Activation occurred in Building 236.
  - NIST firefighters immediately responded to the alarm.
  
- **7:15 p.m.**
  - Based on their observations, the firefighters requested police assistance.
  - Shortly after arrival, the responding police officer notified the Acting NIST Police Chief Young.
  
- **7:32 p.m.**
  - The Acting Police Chief Young arrived at NIST and requested assistance of a Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) drug detection canine unit.
  
- **~ 8:15 p.m.**
  - MCPD canine unit arrived at NIST.
  
- **~ 9:30 p.m.**
  - Additional MCPD resources arrive; MCPD took leadership of the investigation.

## **Actions NIST is taking in response to the incident**

- **We have restricted open NIST Staff access to Building 236 until further notice. Access will require permission by the NIST Associate Director for Laboratory Programs.**
  - No critical research activities were taking place in the building.
  - It was largely unoccupied and is located in a remote area of the campus.
  - Before normal access to Building 236 is restored, we will evaluate the security posture of the building and that remote area of the campus.
  
- **We are reevaluating the security protocols for NIST starting with laboratory workspaces at the NIST Gaithersburg Campus.**
  - Plans are to take appropriate measures to ensure that our mechanisms for preventing unauthorized access and unauthorized activities are adequate.
    - We are reviewing the security posture of both our Gaithersburg and Boulder Campuses.
  
- **No methamphetamine precursor chemicals have been reported as missing from our chemical inventory database.**
  - However, we are evaluating whether additional controls, above those required by statute or regulation, should be implemented to afford tighter security of selected materials.

## **Actions NIST is taking in response to the incident – Cont'd**

- **We are reviewing NIST security patrol procedures, including required check-in times, and strengthening our internal controls related to afterhours access and patrols of the NIST Gaithersburg and Boulder campuses.**
- **We are investigating the installation of individual electronic locks on doors for individual labs to improve access control and accountability.**
  - Access then could be limited on an individual basis, as approved by laboratory management.
- **We plan to identify 3-5 external security experts with specific experience in protecting a research campus to conduct independent reviews of NIST's current security posture (both campuses), including staffing, processes, policies and procedures.**
- **Remember:**
  - **You should be aware that building access logs are archived in the NIST security system and are periodically reviewed for security purposes.** This is a generally-accepted best practice in the security field.
  - **You are also an important part of the NIST security posture.** If you see something out of the ordinary, particularly as it relates to accessing laboratory space or misuse of government space and/or equipment– **please speak up.**



## OPM Data Breaches

- **First breach, announced June 4, of employee personnel data**
  - Affected approximately 4.2 million current and former employees.
    - **All NIST employees should assume they are affected.**
  - Notifications were sent in June.
    - Primarily, some were sent via email and some via US Mail.
    - NIST employees not notified should call CSID, 844-777-2743, to verify and obtain victim support service enrollment information.
  
- **Second breach, announced June 12, of background investigation data**
  - Affected approximately 21.5 million individuals that have undergone an OPM background investigation in or after year 2000.
    - **Breach includes: employees, associates, and some non-applicants, including family members.**
  - Notification letters primarily will be sent by US Mail.
    - Email notifications may be used when mailing address is not available.
    - Notifications will be sent after OPM has contracted a vendor.
  - **Once notified, affected individuals will be auto-enrolled in some services and will need to take action, as described in the notifications, to enroll in others.**

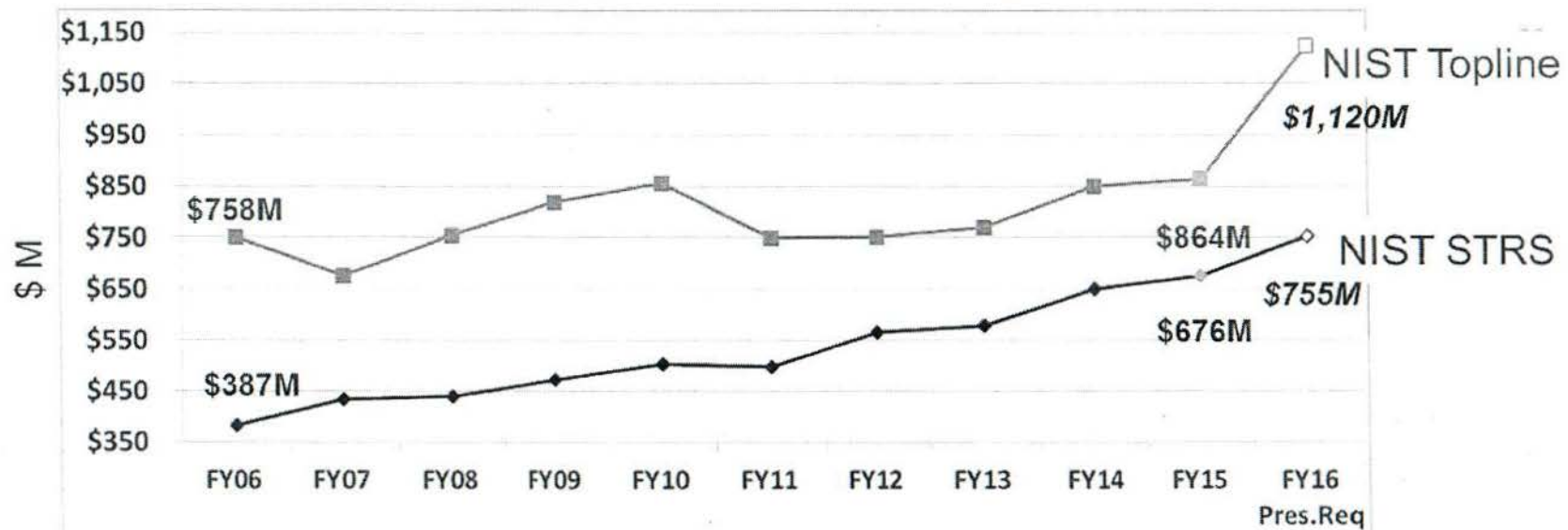
## OPM Data Breaches - Cont'd

- **There is no information at this time to suggest misuse of the information that was stolen from OPM's systems.**
  
- **E-QIP username and passwords were stolen.**
  - **It's recommended that you change passwords/usernames if commonly used.**
  
- **Breaches continue to be under investigation.**
  
- **OPM is working aggressively to strengthen cybersecurity across all of its information systems.**
  
- **Online information resources regarding OPM breaches:**
  - <https://www.opm.gov/cybersecurity>
  - <https://connection.commerce.gov/collection/opm-cybersecurity-incident>
  - <https://inet.nist.gov/pao/news/latest-information-opm-cybersecurity-incident>

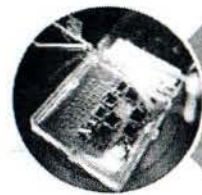
## OPM Data Breaches - Cont'd

- **NIST's cybersecurity program has layers of defenses to protect this type of information stored in NIST information systems.**
  - Threats are constantly changing.
  - There are many lessons to be learned from these breaches.
  
- **White House Cybersecurity Sprint effort to identify high priority government-wide improvements is nearly complete.**
  - Implementing resulting requirements will strengthen our cybersecurity program.
  
- **Things you can do today:**
  - Use your PIV card to log into your computer.
  - Only use authorized online internet services.
  - Be suspicious of unsolicited email messages, phone calls, or texts and phishing attempts.
  - Do not send personally identifiable or other sensitive information through email without encryption.

# President's FY 2016 Budget Request



**Scientific and Technical Research and Services \$754.7 M (+\$79.2 M)**  
Strengthens efforts in many areas of national importance



**Industrial Technology Services \$306.0 M (+\$167.9 M)**  
Requests funds to establish NNMI and continues support for MEP and AMTech



**Construction of Research Facilities \$59.0 M (+\$8.7 M)**  
Sustains funding for facilities and provides an increase for safety, capacity, maintenance, and major repair

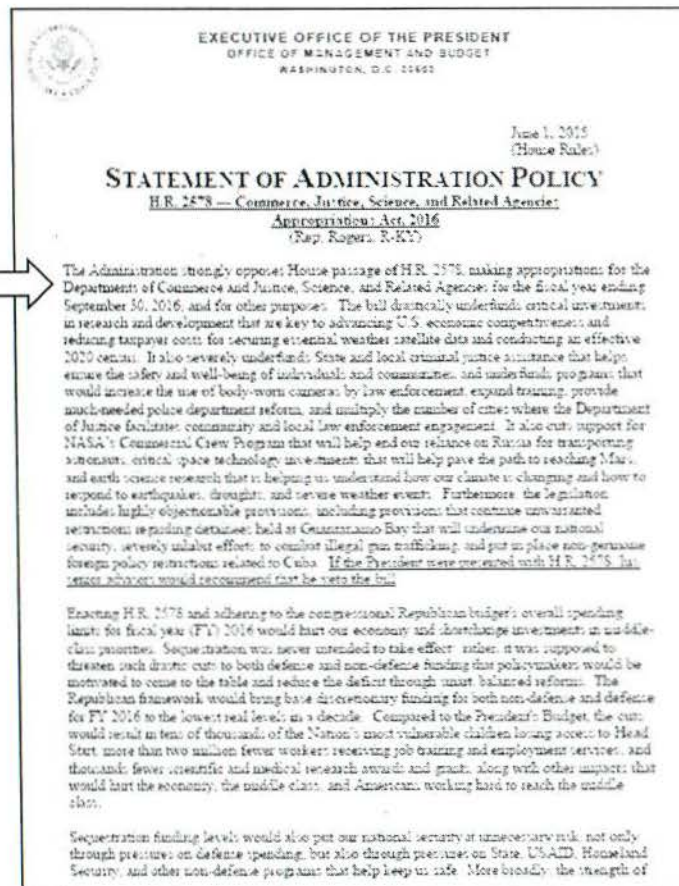
## Status of NIST FY16 Budget Request (Dollars in millions)

	FY 2015 Enacted	FY 2016 President's Request	FY2016 House CJS Mark	House Mark + / (-) Over FY 16 Request	FY2016 Senate CJS Mark	Senate Mark + / (-) Over FY 16 Request
<b>STRS</b>	<b>\$675.5</b>	<b>\$754.7</b>	<b>\$675.0</b>	<b>(\$79.7)</b>	<b>\$684.7</b>	<b>(\$70.0)</b>
Laboratory Programs	591.3	661.6	TBD	N/A	TBD	N/A
Corporate Services	17.3	16.9	TBD	N/A	TBD	N/A
Stds Coord & Special Pgms	66.9	76.2	TBD	N/A	TBD	N/A
<b>ITS</b>	<b>\$138.1</b>	<b>\$306.0</b>	<b>\$130.0</b>	<b>(\$176.0)</b>	<b>\$145.0</b>	<b>(\$161.0)</b>
Advanced Mfg Tech Consortia	8.1	15.0	0.0	(15.0)	15.0	0.0
Hollings Mfg Ext Partnership	130.0	141.0	130.0	(11.0)	130.0	(11.0)
Nat'l Network for Mfg Innovation	0.0	150.0	0.0	(150.0)	0.0	(150.0)
<b>CRF</b>	<b>\$50.3</b>	<b>\$59.0</b>	<b>\$50.0</b>	<b>(\$9.0)</b>	<b>\$63.3</b>	<b>\$4.3</b>
<b>Total, NIST Discretionary</b>	<b>863.9</b>	<b>1,119.7</b>	<b>855.0</b>	<b>(264.7)</b>	<b>893.0</b>	<b>(226.7)</b>

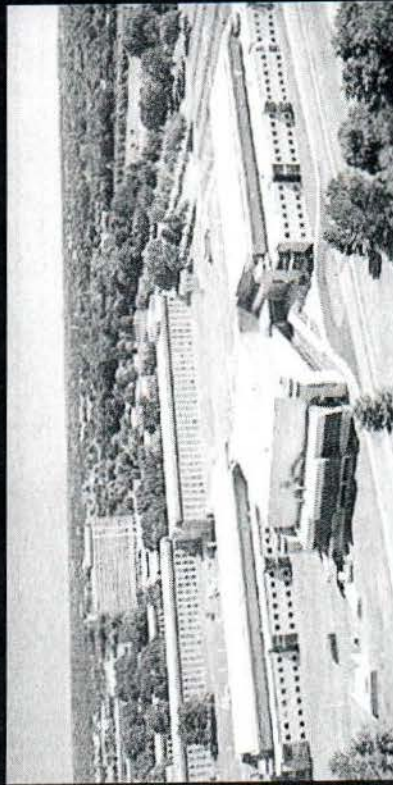
<sup>1/</sup> National Network for Manufacturing Innovation is a newly proposed program in FY 2016.

# Administration Response to House Passage of H.R. 2578 – Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2016

**“The Administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 2578, ... The bill drastically underfunds critical investments in research and development that are key to advancing ...”**



**Beginning the year on a Continuing Resolution is a near certainty**



**Gaithersburg, MD**  
**62 buildings; 578 acres**

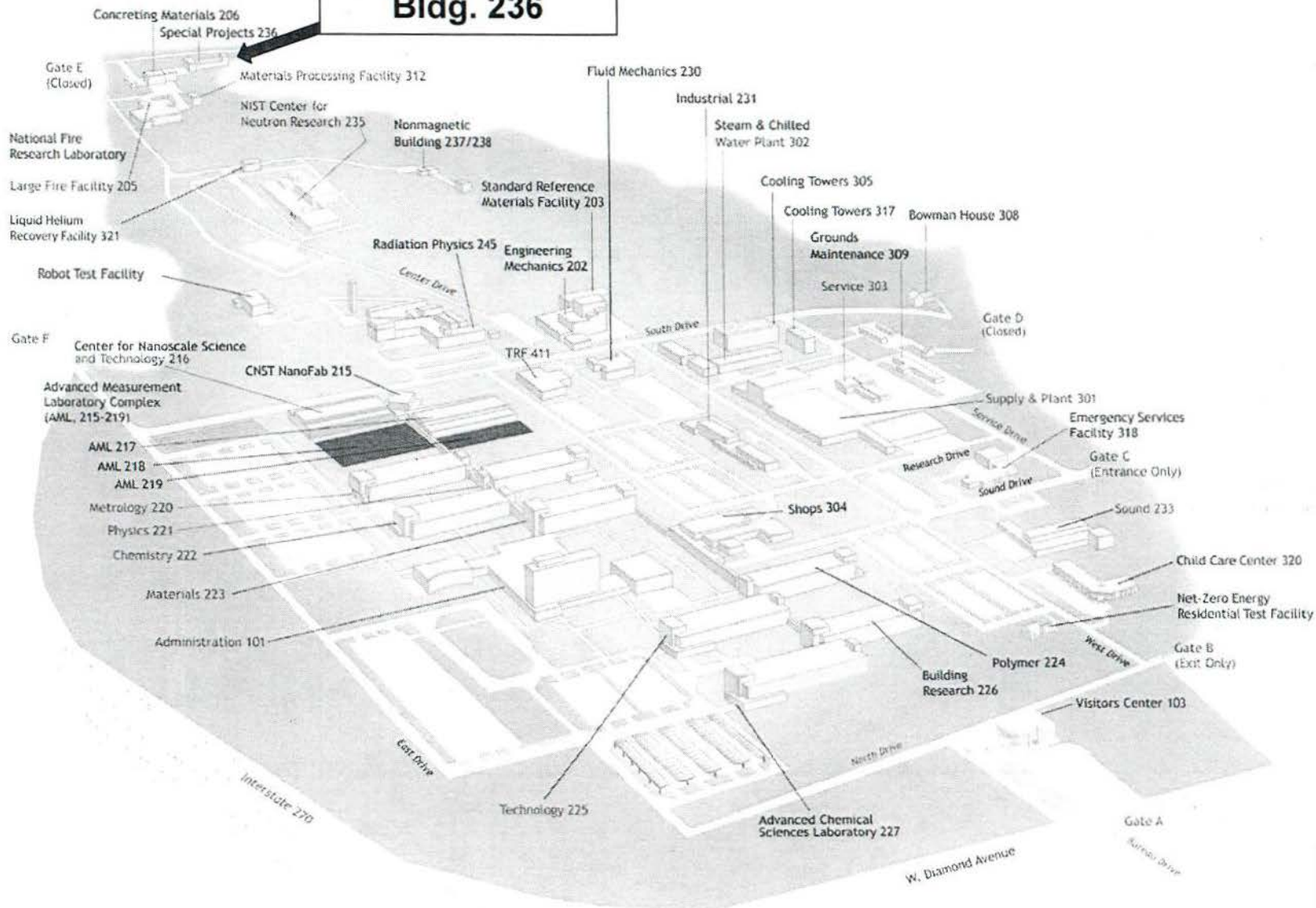


Photo by D.J. Albrecht

**Boulder, CO**  
**26 buildings; 208 acres**

# NIST Gaithersburg Campus Map

**Special Projects  
Bldg. 236**



Return



## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 12:06 PM  
**To:** Porter, Gail  
**Subject:** Re: Town Hall

Qs on 236 not bad. More Qs on OPM.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Jul 30, 2015, at 11:19 AM, "Porter, Gail" <gail.porter@nist.gov> wrote:

>

> Yes. Okay with posting internally. Please make sure Kevin mary and others are in the loop.

>

> Saw the post story.

> Thanks.

>

> Gail Porter

> 301 975 3392 work

> 301 367 7385 cell

>

>> On Jul 30, 2015, at 10:25 AM, "Huergo, Jennifer" <jennifer.huergo@nist.gov> wrote:

>>

>> Willie is fine with it not being recorded. Sharon already got that question from Boulder so she'll explain that because it's mostly a Q&A it won't be recorded because we don't record those.

>>

>> What about posting the slides after? Willie said he'd trust our judgement but doesn't want it to look like we are hiding anything. I think now that the slides have been cleared by FBI/MCPD and the committee has shared even more than that with the Post, it would be good to have them available internally for the many people who will miss today's session. Are you ok with that?

>>

>> Jennifer

>>

>>

>> From: Porter, Gail

>> Sent: Thursday, July 30, 2015 10:04 AM

>> To: Huergo, Jennifer

>> Subject: Re: Town Hall

>>

>> [REDACTED] (b)(6)

>>

>> Haven't seen Post story. Can you send?

>>

>> Ellen asked me about recording and I said no because it will likely be sensitive and FOIAble. Kevin and Willie should be consulted if possible.

>>

>> Gail Porter

>> 301 975 3392 work

>> 301 367 7385 cell

>>

>> On Jul 30, 2015, at 10:00 AM, "Huergo, Jennifer" <jennifer.huergo@nist.gov<mailto:jennifer.huergo@nist.gov>> wrote:

>> Hi Gail,

>> (b)(6) The question came up about recording today's session (Laura said most in Boulder will assume they can watch it later). I'm assuming you and Willie decided against it because it is a sensitive topic and he wants people to feel free to ask (and we don't normally record Qs and As). But should he be prepared to answer the why not question if asked during the Q&A?

>>

>> I'm guessing he'll want to put the slides on the internal network—we cleared them through the FBI and MCPD so there is nothing in them that couldn't go out. Plus the science committee has pretty much told the Post everything in them and more.

>>

>> What do you think?

>> Jennifer

>>

>>

>> \*\*\*\*\*

>> Jennifer Huergo

>> Director of Media Relations

>> Public Affairs Office

>> National Institute of Standards and Technology

>> Office: (301) 975-6343

>> Cell: (202) 309-1027

>> Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov<mailto:Jennifer.Huergo@nist.gov>

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>> <WEM NIST Town Hall Meeting 23 Mar 2015 final.pptx>

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Monday, July 20, 2015 8:42 PM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.; 'kcpullen@doc.gov'; mkruger@doc.gov; bschulte@doc.gov  
**Cc:** Brown, Evelyn A; Swenson, Gayle M.; Ost, Laura M.; Bello, Mark; Esser, Mark; Burrus, James N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Seide, Sharon J.; Baum, Michael A.; Newman, Michael E.; Huergo, Jennifer; rmoore2@doc.gov; Kauffman, Leah R; Suplee, Curt; Schufreider, James R.; Hauk, Kandy; Faselka, Michael J.; Nadeau, Ellen M.; Rigopoulos, Kristina; Ferrier, Robin L.; Boeckl, Kaitlin R.  
**Subject:** Addendum: NIST Media Activity Report 7/20

Addendum:

### Media Inquiries

3. NIST received inquiries from WRC—Channel 4 Television, WJLA—Channel 7 —television, and WSUA—Channel 9 Television about an explosion that occurred on the Gaithersburg campus on the evening of Saturday, July 18. We confirmed information that the explosion has occurred in Bldg. 236, that an employee was injured, treated, and released from a trauma center and that Montgomery County Police were investigating the incident.

Non-Responsive



Non-Responsive



## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 5:51 PM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.; 'kcpullen@doc.gov'; mkruger@doc.gov; bschulte@doc.gov  
**Cc:** Brown, Evelyn A; Porter, Gail; Swenson, Gayle M.; Ost, Laura M.; Bello, Mark; Esser, Mark; Burrus, James N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Seide, Sharon J.; Baum, Michael A.; Newman, Michael E.; rmoore2@doc.gov; Kauffman, Leah R; Suplee, Curt; Schufreider, James R.; Hauk, Kandy; Fasolka, Michael J.; Nadeau, Ellen M.; Rigopoulos, Kristina; Ferrier, Robin L.; Boeckl, Kaitlin R.  
**Subject:** RE: NIST Media Activity Report 7/21

### Addendum:

We spoke to the following reporters regarding the 7/18 explosion in Gaithersburg Building 236:

1. WUSA (CBS) - Andrea McCarren
2. Washington Post – Dan Morse
3. AP – Matt Barakat (his subsequent story has a few factual errors we are working to correct now)
4. WJLA (ABC Washington) – Tom Roussey (also returned calls to Jeffrey Cook & Chad Murray, no response)
5. ABC (network news) Jack Dante

Non-Responsive





## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Porter, Gail  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 22, 2015 7:46 PM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.; 'kcpullen@doc.gov'; mkruger@doc.gov; bschulte@doc.gov  
**Cc:** Brown, Evelyn A; Swenson, Gayle M.; Ost, Laura M.; Bello, Mark; Esser, Mark; Burrus, James N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Seide, Sharon J.; Baum, Michael A.; Newman, Michael E.; Huergo, Jennifer; rmoore2@doc.gov; Kauffman, Leah R; Suplee, Curt; Schufreider, James R.; Hauk, Kandy; Fasolka, Michael J.; Nadeau, Ellen M.; Rigopoulos, Kristina; Ferrier, Robin L.; Boeckl, Kaitlin R.  
**Subject:** Addendum: NIST Media Activity Report 7/22

### Media Inquiries

3. We also provided information on the Bldg. 236 explosion to Cheryl Hogue at C&E News and Paul Wagoner at WTTG—Channel 5.

4. We contacted *Vanity Fair* to correct several factual errors in an online article about the Bldg. 236 incident.

Non-Responsive



2. We sent Juan Romero of *Science* magazine a brief statement about the weekend's explosion incident and referred him to Mont. County Police spokesman Paul Starks for information on the status of their investigation.

Non-Responsive







## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Sent:** Friday, July 24, 2015 4:31 PM  
**To:** 'kcpullen@doc.gov'; mkruger@doc.gov; bschulte@doc.gov  
**Cc:** Brown, Evelyn A; Porter, Gail; Swenson, Gayle M.; Ost, Laura M.; Bello, Mark; Esser, Mark; Burrus, James N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Seide, Sharon J.; Baum, Michael A.; Newman, Michael E.; Huergo, Jennifer; rmoore2@doc.gov; Kauffman, Leah R; Suplee, Curt; Schufreider, James R.; Hauk, Kandy; Faselka, Michael J.; Nadeau, Ellen M.; Rigopoulos, Kristina; Boutin, Chad T.; Ferrier, Robin L.; Boeckl, Kaitlin R.  
**Subject:** NIST Media Activity Report 7/24

### NIST Media Activity Report – July 24, 2015

#### MEDIA EVENTS/OTHER ACTIVITIES

None

#### MEDIA INQUIRIES

1. In the last few days we have contacted the *Associated Press*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Smithsonian Magazine* to request corrections to articles about the Bldg. 236 explosion that contained clear factual errors. *AP* and *Vanity Fair* made the requested corrections. The *Smithsonian* writer has not responded yet.
2. Tom Rousy of *ABC News* called to say that police contacts had told him we had an updated statement about the Bldg. 236 explosion. We told him the only update was that the FBI is now the lead law enforcement agency. We gave him the contact information for the FBI spokesperson.
3. Ian Thomson of *The Register* (U.K.) requested information on the Bldg. 236 explosion. We sent him a brief approved statement.

Non-Responsive



Non-Responsive

## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 29, 2015 4:44 PM  
**To:** 'kcpullen@doc.gov'; mkruger@doc.gov; bschulte@doc.gov  
**Cc:** Brown, Evelyn A; Porter, Gail; Swenson, Gayle M.; Ost, Laura M.; Bello, Mark; Esser, Mark; Burrus, James N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Seide, Sharon J.; Baum, Michael A.; Newman, Michael E.; Huergo, Jennifer; rmoore2@doc.gov; Kauffman, Leah R; Suplee, Curt; Schufreider, James R.; Hauk, Kandy; Fasolka, Michael J.; Nadeau, Ellen M.; Rigopoulos, Kristina; Boutin, Chad T.; Ferrier, Robin L.; Boeckl, Kaitlin R.  
**Subject:** NIST Media Activity Report 7/29

### NIST Media Activity Report – July 29, 2015

#### MEDIA EVENTS/OTHER ACTIVITIES

None

#### MEDIA INQUIRIES

1. Dan Morse of *The Washington Post* asked a number of questions regarding the recent explosion in Building 236, based on what he'd heard from staff of the Senate Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, which spoke with Willie May today. We provided factual responses where we could, and directed him to the FBI and committee where appropriate.

Non-Responsive



3. Sam Lemonick of *Research Professional* asked for information about the Bldg. 236 explosion. We sent him a short approved statement and answered several follow up questions using an approved Q and A.

4. Toby Salinger of the *NY Daily News* called about the problem in Building 236. We returned his call, but did not hear back from him.

Non-Responsive





## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Huergo, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2015 5:15 PM  
**To:** Boutin, Chad T.; 'kcpullen@doc.gov'; mkruger@doc.gov; bschulte@doc.gov  
**Cc:** Brown, Evelyn A; Porter, Gail; Swenson, Gayle M.; Ost, Laura M.; Bello, Mark; Esser, Mark; Burrus, James N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Seide, Sharon J.; Baum, Michael A.; Newman, Michael E.; rmoore2@doc.gov; Kauffman, Leah R; Suplee, Curt; Schufreider, James R.; Hauk, Kandy; Fasolka, Michael J.; Nadeau, Ellen M.; Rigopoulos, Kristina; Ferrier, Robin L.; Boeckl, Kaitlin R.  
**Subject:** RE: NIST Media Activity Report 7/30

**Addendum:**

Rebecca Trager of the Royal Chemistry Society's *Chemistry World* asked questions about the Bldg. 236 explosion based on information she'd received from the Senate Science, Space, and Technology Committee staff. We confirmed what we could and provided her the basic statement on the incident that we've been providing.

Non-Responsive



## Huergo, Jennifer

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**From:** Boutin, Chad T.  
**Sent:** Friday, July 31, 2015 4:36 PM  
**To:** 'kcpullen@doc.gov'; mkruger@doc.gov; bschulte@doc.gov  
**Cc:** Brown, Evelyn A; Porter, Gail; Swenson, Gayle M.; Ost, Laura M.; Bello, Mark; Esser, Mark; Burrus, James N.; Kimball, Kevin A.; Seide, Sharon J.; Baum, Michael A.; Newman, Michael E.; Huergo, Jennifer; rmoore2@doc.gov; Kauffman, Leah R; Suplee, Curt; Schufreider, James R.; Hauk, Kandy; Faselka, Michael J.; Nadeau, Ellen M.; Rigopoulos, Kristina; Boutin, Chad T.; Ferrier, Robin L.; Boeckl, Kaitlin R.  
**Subject:** NIST Media Activity Report 7/31

### NIST Media Activity Report – July 31, 2015

#### MEDIA EVENTS/OTHER ACTIVITIES

None

#### MEDIA INQUIRIES

1. We contacted *Chemistry World* requesting corrections to their article (topping this morning's clip report) on the explosion in Bldg. 236. They made the corrections.

Non-Responsive

