Fire and explosions - Los Alamos is so exciting

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Resonant Ultrasound Spectroscopy (RUS) is an ultrasound-based minimal-effort high-accuracy elastic modulus measurement technique that uses mechanical resonances to extract elastic moduli. The development of this technique occurred at the MAGLAB, which provided the scientific environment that led to RUS receiving the APS Keithley Award for advances in measurement science. Things were kept exciting by the regular explosions as pulsed magnets, stressed to what was thought to be only 95% of failure but where the 10% error bar was wishfully forgotten, and the disastrous Cerro Grande fire where a two-week MAGLAB retreat at my place in Santa Fe that included dogs, cats, goldfish, and children of the MAGLAB, RUS at the MAGLAB led to improved understanding of the thermodynamics of high Tc superconductors and of the second most interesting element, plutonium.