

Department of Energy Fines CH2M Hill Hanford Group For Nuclear Safety Violations Civil Penalty of \$82,500 Issued

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WASHINGTON, DC The Department of Energy (DOE) today announced that it has issued a proposed civil penalty of \$82,500 to CH2M Hill Hanford Group tank farms contractor at the department's Hanford site in Washington, for violations of nuclear safety requirements. The violations did not result in actual harm to workers or the environment.

There were three areas of violation – work processes, quality improvement, and information requirements – which took place in Hanford's tank farms, where 177 large underground tanks hold about 54 million gallons of chemical and radioactive waste left over from Hanford's World War II and cold war missions. DOE investigators found that contractors at the tanks farms inadvertently shut off the leak detector in Hanford's AN tank farm and then failed to accurately indicate their status, overfilled dilution tanks causing spills of water onto contaminated soil and did not report two of the spills, and failed to control the movement of vehicles and equipment onto and around the underground tanks.

Each of the three areas of the violation carries a proposed civil penalty of \$27,500 – for a total proposed penalty of \$82,500. In its letter of proposed violation and civil penalty, the Energy Department notes that recent corrective actions have been both aggressive and comprehensive and resulted in a mitigation of the maximum civil penalty.

The preliminary notice of violation will become final in 30 days unless the violations are denied with sufficient justification. The Price-Anderson Amendments Act directed the department to develop and enforce nuclear safety rules with its contractors. Additional information on this action and other aspects of the enforcement program will be available via the Internet at <http://www.eh.doe.gov/enforce>.

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