

# DOE Cites CH2M Hill for Violating Nuclear Safety Rules Hanford Tank Farm Contractor Faces Fine of more than \$300,000

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON , D.C. -- The Department of Energy (DOE) today notified the CH2M Hill Hanford Group, Inc. (CH2M Hill) that it will fine the company \$316,250 for violations of the department's nuclear safety requirements. CH2M Hill is the department's contractor responsible for storage of highly radioactive and hazardous liquid waste at the Hanford Tank Farms near Richland, Wash.

The Preliminary Notice of Violation (PNOV) issued today, cites four events that took place in 2003 and 2004. These events include the contamination of several workers while removing equipment from a valve pit (June 2003) and the exposure of a worker to radiation while removing equipment from a tank (July 2004). As a result of the July 2004 event, the worker received an exposure of 22 rem to his hand (as compared to an annual DOE limit of 50 rem). In both events, no regulatory limit was exceeded. However, the exposures could have been much higher because effective controls were not in place.

We want our contractors to identify and address safety issues *before* they cause a serious problem, said John Shaw, Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety and Health. These issues have been identified before and attempts at correction have not been effective. It is important that senior management get involved to be sure that these problems are corrected now.

The amount of the proposed civil penalty was based on the significance of the violations. In its letter to CH2M Hill, DOE noted a lack of sustained improvement in CH2M Hill nuclear operations, demonstrating the need for further improvement in nuclear safety culture.

CH2M Hill has 30 days to respond to DOE's concerns. Unless the contractor denies the violations with sufficient justification, the PNOV will become final and the contractor will have to pay the \$316,250 fine.

The Price-Anderson Amendments Act of 1988 authorizes the Energy Department to undertake regulatory actions against contractors for violations of its nuclear safety requirements. The enforcement program encourages DOE contractors to identify and correct nuclear safety deficiencies at an early stage, before they contribute to or result in more serious events. Additional details on this and other enforcement actions are available on the Internet at <http://www.eh.doe.gov/enforce>.

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