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DOE Cites Hanford Contractors for Price Anderson Safety Violations

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Department of Energy (DOE) has issued a Preliminary Notice of Violation and proposed civil penalty of \$137,500 to Fluor Hanford Inc., a contractor at the DOE Hanford site in Richland, Washington, for violations of nuclear safety rules and procedures during waste characterization activities at the Hanford site.

The violations did not result in actual harm to workers or the public. DOE took this action because, if not corrected, the violations could have led to improper burial of transuranic waste at the Hanford site. Transuranic waste, the discarded byproducts of nuclear weapons production, are required to be buried at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in Carlsbad, New Mexico.

Fluor Hanford Inc. provided technical support for the waste characterization activities under an agreement with Bechtel Hanford Inc., the prime contractor for the activity that is responsible for quality performance of all work under the contract. A less severe violation with no associated civil penalty was also issued to Bechtel Hanford. Both contractors have taken corrective actions to address the violations.

The Price-Anderson Amendments Act of 1988 authorizes the Energy Department to undertake regulatory enforcement actions against contractors for violations of its nuclear safety requirements. The enforcement program is designed to have contractors correct procedural violations to prevent more serious events from occurring.

Additional details on this and other enforcement actions are available on the Internet at <http://www.eh.doe.gov/enforce>.

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