

November 8, 2002

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Tom Fitzsimmons, Director
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John Iani, Regional Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
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Subject: Public Notice

Dear Mssrs Klein, Schepens, Fitzsimmons, and Iani,

Effective public notice is essential to attract and engage the public to become involved in Hanford cleanup decision-making. Consistency is important, not only for Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) actions but in all Hanford-related announcements. We recommend the following to ensure high quality public notices:

1. The TPA Community Relations Plan (CRP) guidelines should be followed for all Hanford public participation notices and activities, not just TPA actions. The Hanford Advisory Board (Board) recognizes that, while these guidelines are not legally required for all decisions made at Hanford, they are a good baseline for effective notice.
2. Likewise, the principles of the Public Involvement Committee White Paper (which was adopted by the Board as a document of record) should be followed. Specifically, this means developing notices that are:

Substantive

- The notices should identify the cleanup actions or decisions in clear, non-technical terms (not just display the title of the document or TPA milestone number). It is important that the notice also explain how or why these decisions might affect public or environmental health.

Timely

A sequence of steps should be followed to ensure a timely notice:

- Notices should be mailed by agencies to the appropriate mailing list at the start of the comment period.
- To enable interested groups to provide notice through newsletters and mailings, all announcements of any kind of public comment period should be provided to citizen groups, the Board and “highly interested” persons 30 to 45 days before the start of the comment period. Notice of public meetings or hearings needs to be provided 30-45 days in advance in order for groups and others to prepare turnout notices.
- Notices should be placed in local media outlets one to two weeks prior to the meeting to serve as a useful reminder for the public.

Regular

- Consistency and familiarity help the public recognize opportunities for involvement. Notices should be designed and placed in a regular pattern in the same newspapers, flyers and/or television and radio announcements so they are easily recognizable. Ads should be placed in newspapers of general circulation in the locale of public meetings.

3. Notices of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) actions should be included in the regular TPA publications, and notice of NEPA determinations and comment periods should also be sent to the appropriate TPA mailing list and follow CRP guidelines.

In the interest of achieving our mission as a Board, “to assist the broader public in becoming more informed and meaningfully involved in Hanford cleanup decisions,” the Board strongly recommends that each of the three agencies incorporate these values for public notice into their work.

Sincerely,

Todd Martin, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

This advice represents HAB consensus for this specific topic. It should not be taken out of context to extrapolate Board agreement on other subject matters.

cc: Wade Ballard, Deputy Designated Federal Official, U.S. Department of Energy
Michael Gearheard, Environmental Protection Agency
Michael Wilson, Washington State Department of Ecology
Martha Crosland, U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters
Greg Hughes, U.S. Fish and Wildlife
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations