

DOE Names Paul Kruger Director of Environment, Safety and Health

John D. Wagoner, Manager of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Richland Operations Office, announced today the selection of Paul Kruger to head the Office of Environment, Safety and Health (ESH). Kruger is now responsible for setting Hanford standards, and overseeing worker safety, health, and environmental compliance at the 560-square-mile Hanford Site near Richland, Washington.

"Paul has done an excellent job since coming to Hanford in 1989. He has an extensive background managing environment and health programs, as well as a personal resolve to maximize worker safety by working with DOE and contractor project and program managers," said Wagoner.

In 1978, Kruger began his career as an associate planner with the Snohomish County Planning Department in Everett, Washington. He approved and denied subdivision applications, and ensured regulatory compliance of land subdivisions. Kruger began his federal government career as an environmental scientist with the U.S. Geological Survey and Bureau of Land Management in 1979. He was responsible for managing environment, safety, and health programs for the federal oil and gas leasing and development program. He also wrote environmental assessments and impact statements for oil and gas drilling in Montana.

Kruger transferred to DOE as a program manager in the Laboratory Management Division in 1989. Kruger oversaw the Pacific Northwest Laboratory's Environment, Safety and Health Programs. He performed this task until being named Acting Director of DOE's Office of Safety and Assessment in 1995. Following this assignment, he was permanently named to his current post.

"My top priority is to involve the actual workers in developing worker safety and health programs and policies. I believe they can provide valuable input into how to best deal with workplace hazards. I will also work with DOE-HQ to reduce bureaucracy by cutting unnecessary regulations so that ESH program functions and improvements can be delivered at the worker level," said Kruger. Kruger recently led a campaign to eliminate 87% of local directives that did not add safety value to Hanford facilities.

Kruger said he plans to implement the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) at Hanford. DOE is not presently regulated by OSHA, but sets its own safety standards. "The VPP seeks to encourage voluntary contractor compliance with OSHA standards at DOE nuclear facilities. By implementing the VPP, we can enhance safety at Hanford and reduce costs," said Kruger. He also noted that OSHA standards are highly reputable because of their widescale use in private industry.

Kruger said he is a firm believer in "honest" DOE and contractor self-assessment as a method to determine potential safety vulnerabilities. "Because we have changed our contracting system to compensate our contractors based on performance, we will encourage them to find real safety problems and reward them for resolving those problems," he said. Kruger said proactive measures will be taken to enhance worker safety and health by conducting better assessments of the workplace, medical exams, and limiting exposures through engineering controls.

In order to maximize efficiencies with the ESH area, Kruger said he will work with Hanford contractors and regulators to determine how they can better operate within the framework of the Tri-Party Agreement. The Tri-Party Agreement is a contract between DOE, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Washington Department of Ecology which seeks to clean up Hanford and bring the site into

environmental compliance over the long term.

RL-95-076 # # #

For more information contact:

Keith V. Taylor, (509) 376-2282

Department of Energy Office of External Affairs

RL-95-076