



**Department of Energy**  
Richland Operations Office  
P.O. Box 550  
Richland, Washington 99352

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To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is being provided by the U.S. Department of Energy Richland Operations Office because a current or former Hanford Site worker has filed a claim related to asbestos exposure while employed at the Hanford Site. This letter documents asbestos-related concerns that arose on the Hanford Site in late 2011 and early 2012.

Many of the buildings on the Hanford Site contain or contained materials made with asbestos in varying amounts. For that reason, strict controls are in place to protect workers from exposure while working in or demolishing these buildings.

On December 14, 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) issued an Early Warning Report (Report No. 12-P-0125) regarding the use of certain asbestos demolition methods at multiple sites, including the Hanford Site. The OIG warned that certain building demolition methods that were being used at the Hanford Site, and other sites around the country, were not proven to be protective of human health.

In early 2012, Hanford Site employees began raising concerns related to the EPA OIG report and other asbestos-related issues. The employees requested that certain Deactivation and Decommissioning sites and existing facilities and steam lines on the Hanford Site be inspected for Regulated Asbestos-Containing Material, that any asbestos material be identified and/or cleaned up, and that any potential adverse health effects be determined. Accordingly, a team consisting of the U.S. Department of Energy Richland Operations Office (RL) and Office of River Protection (ORP), Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council and Hanford Guards Union Safety Representatives, site contractors, and site employees was convened to address these concerns. This team developed an action plan in response to the employees' concerns.

Those actions included an evaluation of the industrial hygiene sampling results which are summarized in a report produced at the request of the Department of Energy. The report is available on the asbestos information page on the Hanford website:  
<http://www.hanford.gov/page.cfm/EmployeeAsbestosInformation>.

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This report concluded:

The data reviewed for this evaluation, in which personal samples, area/perimeter samples and additional post demolition/clean-up samples were evaluated, showed no asbestos exposures above the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL), and indicates there is little in the way of occupational asbestos exposure risk to the workers on the Site due to the activities associated with demolition of facilities and legacy debris.

While the sampling analysis shows conditions during and after demolition activities did not exist for exposure to asbestos above the OSHA PEL, this does not mean that concerns about exposure to asbestos are unfounded. We all have a right to raise concerns and to have those concerns addressed.

Best regards,



Matt McCormick, Manager  
Richland Operations Office