

Advice: Safety at the WTP

The Hanford Advisory Board (Board) believes that implementation of Integrated Safety Management (ISM) precepts is a critical element in each phase of a project, regardless of whether it is a construction or demolition project. Based on recent safety reviews the Board believes that ISM is lacking at the Waste Treatment Plant (WTP). The two major components of ISM; 1) recognized process steps (identify hazards, hazard mitigation, hazard control, perform work, feedback); and 2) principles of behavior (attitude of managers and employees) have not been applied across the breadth of the WTP project.

The Board believes that the ISM process should be implemented in all phases of a project from the very beginning of developing functional requirements through the design, construction and operation of the facility.

We recommend that the following actions be included in the steps being implemented to improve the safety posture of the WTP:

Advice:

1. Define and communicate clearly to management, workers and the public what “safety culture” means
2. ISM at WTP should be implemented over the entire project
3. We hope that the Department of Energy (DOE) addresses the safety issues at the WTP with the same openness, clarity, and worker and public involvement as was demonstrated in the recognition of safety issues resulting from worker exposure to Beryllium.
4. DOE should direct development and implementation of communications to workers that demonstrate caring, honesty and fairness and that include openness, listening, and feedback without fear of reprisal

The Board applauds the recent commitment to safety from the Secretary of Energy and the Implementation Plan developed to address safety issues identified in the safety review of the WTP performed by the Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board. We will be closely following the progress of the Plan and other WTP activities with great interest. The Board supports safe construction and operation of the WTP and we expect that continuing dialogue with the Department of Energy may result in the Board providing additional advice in the future.