

Central Plateau completes first post-VPP-star self-assessment

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The Central Plateau Remediation Project's first self-assessment since being awarded Voluntary Protection Program "star" status was a success. The self-assessment and resulting report to the Department of Energy are annual requirements for preserving an organization's star status.

The self-assessment found eleven noteworthy practices and nine opportunities for improvement. The improvement opportunities have been presented to the project's senior management and the Safety Improvement Planning task team for inclusion in the 2003 Safety Improvement Plan.

The 12-person self-assessment team was made up of four non-Central-Plateau members and eight members of various groups within the project. Six had previous experience in the VPP assessment process and a few had attended DOE Voluntary Protection Program Safety and Health Program Assessment training. One member had been a part of a DOE Headquarters on-site review team.

The team used a process developed by the Hanford VPP Champions team in 2002. More than 85 formal interviews were conducted in just two days. Team members also performed facility inspections, document reviews and informal interviews to gather information.

The response from employees revealed that workplace safety has not declined since the October 2001 DOE-VPP on-site review. While most areas remained positive and steady, a few specific areas had improved during the past year. In light of the transition of workscope and personnel into the project during the year, this is considered an excellent accomplishment.

The average numerical score derived by using established evaluation criteria for 32 subject areas is 8.5 out of a possible 10. The entire self-assessment report is available on the Central Plateau Remediation Project Web site at <http://apweb02.rl.gov/phmc/cprp/index.cfm?PageNum=58>. ■



Workers safely weld the shield plug onto a cask containing spent nuclear fuel before it is shipped from the 324 Building. During the self-assessment, employees of the Central Plateau Remediation Project indicated that workplace safety had not declined since the October 2001 DOE-VPP on-site review.

'Pole' says VPP is effective

On the way to a Voluntary Protection Program self-assessment interviews at the 3769 Building, interviewer Souix Williams noticed that an electrical pole was leaning dramatically toward the river. She reported it to the manager of the building as a possible safety threat. The building manager reported it to the area building administrator, who in turn got in touch with the landlord organization. Within a few short days, Electrical Utilities personnel had inspected the pole and found it had rotted.

The proper equipment was quickly brought in to remove the rotting pole and replace it with a new one. "This is a *great* example of what the Voluntary Protection Program is all about," said Rich Kobelski, VPP assessment coordinator. ■