

# Regular Features



## LETTERS

Employees are invited to write letters of general interest on work-related topics. Anonymous letters will not be printed. We reserve the right to edit letters or not to accept letters for publication. Send your letters to the *Reach*, B3-30, or to \*Hanford Reach on e-mail. Letters are limited to 300 words, and must include your name, company, work group and location. Opinions expressed are those of the author and not of DOE-RL, ORP or their contractors.

### Fire anniversary

As June 27 approaches, we should take time to observe the first anniversary of the "Great Hanford Fire of 2000." Perhaps we could count the dust storms that we've been caught in, or the times when we left a car or an office window open, only to later find everything covered with a layer of dirt.

Or how about the times you went outside for a smoke break or a walk to an adjacent office building and had to rub the sand out of your stinging eyes, or dig the dirt out of your ears afterward? And how about the times when Highways 240 or 24 were closed because of some windstorm blowing too much sand across the roadway, causing delays getting to work, or home?

As I sit atop the PFP building doing my duties, I watch a massive dust cloud rise up. I remind myself of how this all came about, and how preventable it really was.

Lest we forget, it was a vehicle accident that spilled fuel off the roadway into the grasslands, igniting flames hot enough to melt the pavement. Then came the fateful decision by our land caretakers not to let the bulldozers contain the fire, while it was still controllable, but to let the desert burn — until houses and outbuildings were caught in the path of its destruction. Then the flames had to be knocked down. I also need to mention the death of a herd of 50 elk trapped in the fire up on Rattlesnake Mountain.

The logic of a natural burn this massive was outrageous and totally unnecessary. It's not up to me, but if it were, I would have those responsible for this terrible waste come forward and account for their actions to the public at large in hopes that this never happens again. We now pay the price for this stupidity and will for some time to come.

**Jeff LaBrant**  
Fluor Hanford

**Editors' note:** *John Wood, Fluor Hanford vice president of Hanford Site Operations, responds:*

"I certainly agree we need to observe the anniversary of the huge and costly Command 24 Wildland Fire. It is a miracle that that no one was killed, and none of the 900 emergency responders were seriously injured during this fire, one of the hottest and fastest fires this nation has experienced. It's important that we recognize the heroic efforts of those who fought this fire.

"Last fall, reports on the fire from the Department of Energy Richland Operations Office and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledged that the site response to the initial event was "proactive and timely," and there was no delay in deployment of equipment. Bulldozers were immediately put to use in the firefighting efforts, but had little effect because the fire traveled very quickly.

"As for the elk, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory biologists note that the main escape from the fire was up Rattlesnake Mountain and then south to private farms and rangelands. Following the fire, weekly aerial and daily ground surveys did not reveal evidence of any dead elk. Field observers did note that one animal was severely burned and would not likely survive. Two elk were hit and killed on Highway 240 immediately after the fire, and later last July a dead elk was reported on private adjacent lands.

"Since last year, DOE and its contractors have taken action to repair damage from the fire and prepare for this year's fire season. DOE has dedicated more than a million dollars to mitigating the effects of the blowing dust. Revegetation and soil stabilization began almost immediately after the fire and continue this year. This spring, a multi-contractor team planted 1,400 trees near the most heavily populated facilities and offices in the 200 West Area to serve as a wind and dust break (May 7, *Hanford Reach*). A water- and energy-conserving drip irrigation system is being installed to sustain the trees.

"The presence of potentially hazardous blowing dust around the Hanford Site is definitely one result of the fire.

"The procedures and communications between landholding and fire response agencies have been improved. The Hanford Fire Department recently conducted a prescribed burn along portions of Highways 24 and 240 to mitigate fire potential (June 18, *Hanford Reach*).

"As we observe this anniversary let's remember how prone this area is to wildfires, and take all precautions throughout this dangerous fire season."

*Continued on page 8.*

# Regular Features

## Did you BIP?

In the past week, I have noticed two *Tri-City Herald* articles featuring pictures of Hanford contractor employees with their security badges in plain view.

I thought it was a matter of security to remove or pocket the badge during any photo opportunity. Unless the policy has changed, which I doubt, perhaps now would be a good opportunity to remind folks to "BIP" [put your badge in your pocket] when being photographed, grabbing lunch (downtown), or shopping before heading home.

**Joe Maday**

*DynCorp Tri-Cities Services*

**Editors' note:** Protection Technology Hanford Security Education notes that the policy has not changed. Employees should remove their badges before being photographed and after leaving the Hanford Site. Site photographers have been instructed to have employees remove security badges before photographing the employees.

According to DOE RLID 473.1 *Protection of Safeguards and Security Interests*: "Security badges are required for the Hanford Site, except for Public Access Areas, and shall be worn at all times while in a security area." In this case a security area is any area requiring a security badge for access. Badges shall be removed upon departure from a security area. It is every employee's responsibility to protect and safeguard his or her security badge. The badging policies established by DOE and its contractors are designed to help with badge protection.

## Watch your speed

I would tend to agree with the individuals who say to exercise caution and mind the speed limit, but I would also like to remind people that the speed limit on Highway 240 is posted at 65 miles per hour, at least until you pass the Benton City exit where it goes to 55 mph. It seems that there are people who are under the impression that the speed limit is somewhat lower.

I would like to remind those individuals that driving 10 to 15 mph under the speed limit is as dangerous, if not more so, than speeding. You not only disturb the flow of traffic, you create a situation where people who are actually following the speed limit are forced to pass you, thus creating even more chances for an accident. If you wish to drive at a lower speed, please avoid Highway 240 and exit the

site via the Wye Barricade where the posted limit is 55 mph.

The next time you are driving on Highway 240, please look at the speed you are traveling, and be sure you follow the posted limit, for your own safety and that of the others on the road.

**Jim Rodgers**

*Eberline Services Hanford*



## NEWSBRIEFS

### Radiation Worker Practice Area moves

The Volpentest HAMMER Training and Education Center Radiation Worker Practice Area, formerly in the southeast corner of the Training Support Building (TSB), has been moved to HAMMER High Bay No. 6. Radiation Worker Practice Area services start today at the new location.

### Mask Fit moves to HAMMER

Mask Fit will move from the Hanford Training Center to the Volpentest HAMMER Training and Education Center on Thursday, July 19. Mask fitting services will not be available on July 19 but will resume Monday, July 23, at the HAMMER Training Support Building, room 25D. This room is in the southeast corner of the TSB. ♦

*Features continued on next page*

# Regular Features

## CLASSES



### Training for RCT candidates to begin July 10

From July 10 through Sept. 29, EXITECH Columbia Corporation will offer a Radiological Controls Technician Fundamentals Academics training program on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., and on Saturdays, 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. RCT Fundamentals Academics training consists of 13 subjects beginning with mathematics and algebra and ending with radiation detection theory. Training will be conducted in the classroom and through practical and hands-on exercises.

RCT Fundamentals Academics training is the first phase of a generic, two-phased Department of Energy RCT initial training program that is designed to prepare RCT candidates for work at DOE facilities. ECC expects to offer the second phase of training, RCT Site Academics, from October to December.

The cost of this course is \$3,876. Payment terms are available. Enrollment is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information about this training program or about pursuing a career in the radiological controls field, contact ECC at 946-2573 or send an e-mail message to [kadamson@excol.com](mailto:kadamson@excol.com).

### D2000 offers trenching and excavation classes

D2000 Safety Solutions will offer Trenching and Excavation for Competent Persons courses at the Volpentest HAMMER Training and Education Center three times this year. Classes begin at 7:30 a.m. and will be held Monday, July 23, through Wednesday, July 25, TSB Annex Room 1; or Monday, Oct. 22, through Wednesday, Oct. 24, TSB Annex Room 1.

The hands-on course is designed to meet the requirements of 29 CFR 1926.650. Students successfully completing the program receive a certificate of completion. The class has been reviewed and approved for 2.4 CEUs by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training. The course cost is \$595 per person. Class size is limited to 25. Students may register by phoning Vicky DeMoss at (800) 551-8763.

### USQ class offered in July

The Department of Energy Richland Operations Office will sponsor the Epsilon Solutions Systems' Unreviewed Safety Questions class to be held July 17 to 19 at the Volpentest HAMMER Training and Education Center in room 15. The price is \$813 per person.

The class is intended for DOE and DOE contractor personnel who are involved with the preparation, review and approval processes for Unreviewed Safety Questions. This course is endorsed by the DOE Office of Nuclear Safety Policy and Standards. Students will be taught the requirements and intent of 10 CFR Part 830, "Nuclear Safety Management," Regulation subpart B 830.203, DOE G 424.X-X, "Implementation Guide for Use in Addressing Unreviewed Safety Question Requirements," DOE Order 5480.21, "Unreviewed Safety Questions," and the December 1992 DOE "Interpretation of DOE 5480.21."

Visit the Parallax Web site at <http://www.parallax-engr.com> for a detailed course description and to obtain the registration form. To register, submit the completed form and payment to Parallax, A2-32, FED/239. For more information call the DOE Training Administration Office at 376-8284. ♦

*Features continued on next page*

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## July Events at the Hanford Technical Library

The following events will take place in Room 101R at the Consolidated Information Center, Washington State University campus

- **Library Tour** — Thursday, July 5, 8:30 a.m. Take a tour and find out what services are available to you in the library and on your desktop.
- **How to Find Information on the Internet** — Thursday, July 12, 12 noon. Learn how to tunnel through the mountains of information and discover Internet sites that are useful for your day-to-day work.

The library staff is also available for presentations at group meetings or brown-bag sessions. For more information, contact Mary Frances Lembo at 372-7441 or at [mf.lembo@pnl.gov](mailto:mf.lembo@pnl.gov). Visit the library's Web site at <http://library.pnl.gov>. The Hanford Technical Library is a site service operated by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

## Red Cross needs volunteer POCs for future blood draws

The American Red Cross needs volunteers to serve as points-of-contact for blood draws at 2420 Stevens Center. The job requires the POCs to help with badging the Red Cross volunteers and to be available (on-call basis) to assist as needed during the blood draw. The next blood draw is scheduled for Wednesday, July 25, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Call Zona Gale at 376-5417 if you are able to help. ♦



Vanpool ads are run for two weeks. Ads must be resubmitted to run in subsequent issues of the *Hanford Reach*. The deadline for submissions is Thursday, 10 days prior to publication.

Day & Zimmermann Protection Technology Hanford reminds employees to wear their badges. Vanpool and carpool drivers are responsible for ensuring riders are badged. If a passenger forgets his or her badge, Patrol must be informed at the barricades. For more information, look on the Hanford Web in the Projects and Activities section, Safeguards and Security at <http://www.rl.gov:1050/sas/pg1v3htm>.

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## KENNEWICK

Vanpool to 200E has opening, 8x9s. Picks up at the church on 19th and Olympia, Garfield and Albertson's on Clearwater. Drops off at 274-AW, 2750-E and 2704-HV. Call **Sue Hulsey** at 372-3752. 6/25

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## PASCO

Vanpool No.139 to 200E and 200W needs riders, 8x9, 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Picks up at Road 100 Sleep Inn with a stop at the Federal Building in Richland. Contact **Robert Spears** at 372-0984 or **Sarah Larinaga** at 372-2826. 6/25

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## RICHLAND

Vanpool No. 91 needs riders and back-up driver(s). 8x9s, 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This is a door-to-door vanpool. That's right, we pick you up at home! Starts on the 500 block of Douglass Avenue, to the 100 block of Goethals, travels to Duportail, along Cottonwood Drive, over to Wright, Thayer, Van Geisen and north George Washington Way. Drops off at MO-286, 274-E, 2750-E and maybe 2704-HV. Contact **Rich Bowen** at 373-5359. 7/2 ♦