

ANNOUNCEMENT

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

RL No.:

Issued:

To: ALL HANFORD EMPLOYEES

Subject: MANAGERS' ANNOUNCEMENT ON BERYLLIUM WORKER HEALTH ISSUES

You may be aware that Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson recently announced a Clinton administration proposal to address current and former U.S. Department of Energy contractor employee illnesses that may have resulted from their exposure to beryllium in DOE nuclear facilities. This proposal is intended to focus the DOE's efforts on getting workers affected by exposure to beryllium the help they need. DOE, in working with legislators from various states, has proposed legislation that will enable the initiation of this new program.

As we await the outcome of the legislative process, we would like to take this opportunity to remind you that although Hanford's use of beryllium ceased in the late 1980's, past exposure can be a source of concern. Hanford has an ongoing, aggressive Chronic Beryllium Disease Prevention Program that is designed to address the complex issues associated with having worked with or around beryllium. Although participation in this program is voluntary, we strongly encourage every Hanford worker who believes he or she may have been exposed to beryllium, even seemingly small exposures, to complete a beryllium questionnaire. The questionnaire can be found on the Hanford Web at <http://www.hanford.gov/safety/beryllium/index.htm> or can be obtained from contractor safety and health organizations or the Hanford Environmental Health Foundation.

RL and the Office of River Protection are committed to providing high quality health care services to the Hanford workforce. Each employee has the right to raise concerns about work related safety issues, including concerns related to one's health, without fear of retaliation or reprisal.

As more information becomes available on the new initiative, we will provide it to you. Until that time, if you have questions or concerns regarding Hanford's Beryllium Disease Prevention Program, please contact your health and safety representative, the Hanford Environmental Health Foundation, at (509) 372-0137, or Hanford's Beryllium Awareness Group at (509) 376-6005.

Sincerely,



Keith A. Klein, Manager
Richland Operations Office



Richard T. French, Manager
Office of River Protection

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