

Freedom Of Information Act Electronic FOIA Request Detail

Request Number: 20180808022151780
Name: Zahra Hirji
Organization: BuzzFeed News
Address: 1630 Connecticut Ave NW, 7th Floor
Washington, DC 20009
Country: United States
Phone Number:
Fax Number: n/a
E-mail:

Reasonably Describe Records:

Description: Zahra Hirji BuzzFeed News 1630 Connecticut Ave NW, FI 7 Washington, DC 20009

DOE's Richland Operations Office and Office of River Protection FOIA Request Service Center 1000 Independence Avenue, SW August 8, 2018 FOIA Requested. Fee Waiver Requested. Dear FOIA Officer, I am requesting under the federal Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552 for access to and copies of all communication among Department of Energy staff, including but not limited to Doug Shoop and Anne White, and between DOE staff and its Hanford contractors CH2M Hill and WRPS relating and/or referring to the May 2018 report: "Test Plan for the Radiochemical Analysis of MERV 8 Air Handling Intake Filter." This report was published on May 2018 by Washington River Protection Solutions LLC's S.R. Doll and was prepared for the U.S. Department of Energy Office of River Protection. Per the report, radioactive contamination was found in a Hanford's 222-S air handling unit. The 222-S lab is located nearly 1-mile downwind of the Plutonium Finishing Plant, where the discovery of contamination outside the radiological boundary prompted an ongoing demolition work stop. The date range for this request is February 21, 2018, when the air handling unit prefilter was removed from service during routine maintenance, and the date the search for responsive requests is processed. This report was shared with at least some Hanford staff and contractor workers in mid-July 2018. The FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 amended the FOIA as follows (5 USC 552(a)(8)): (A) An agency shall— (i) withhold information under this section only if— (I) the agency reasonably foresees that disclosure would harm an interest protected by an exemption described in subsection (b); or (II) disclosure is prohibited by law; and (ii) (I) consider whether partial disclosure of information is possible whenever the agency determines that a full disclosure of a requested record is not possible; and (II) take reasonable steps necessary to segregate and release nonexempt information. The Department of Energy should not fail to meet the requirements of Section 552(a)(8) when processing my request and release responsive records to me in full or at least in part, and on a rolling basis as the records become available. I am making this request as a journalist and intend to use the information in order to write and publish articles for public dissemination. BuzzFeed News employs over 100 reporters who cover a wide range of news topics. Therefore, I request that the EPA recognize BuzzFeed's News media status and waive any fees associated with responding, including research and duplication. I am willing to pay up to \$25 and ask that I be contacted if the response to this request will cost more. I also request an expedited processing of this request for records. The discovery of this air filter being contaminated with radioactive particles, likely coming from the Plutonium Finishing Plant nearly a mile away and months after PFP's demolition had stopped, suggests the spread of PFP's contamination was much wider than initially thought and more Hanford workers were possibly exposed than originally thought. The communications around this report and its finding may shed new light on worker and public exposure to contamination, and it comes as plans to resume demolition at PFP are underway. I also request that the records be provided in electronic form, to the extent that this is possible, and that any questions about this request are provided by phone or email. My contact information is
Sincerely, Zahra Hirji Reporter, BuzzFeed News

Optional Information:

Describe Yourself: A representative of the new media affiliate BuzzFeed News and this request is made part of news gathering and not for a commercial use.
Other
Online news site (<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/>)

Cost Information: I request a waiver or reduction of fees.

Waiver Request:

The subject of the request: Whether the subject of the requested records concerns "the operations or activities of the government."

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The informative value of the information to be disclosed: Whether the disclosure is "likely to contribute" to an understanding of government operations or activities.

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The contribution to an understanding by the general public of the subject likely to result from disclosure, taking into account your ability and intent to disseminate the information to the public in a form that can further understanding of the subject matter.

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The significance of the contribution to public understanding: Whether the disclosure is likely to contribute "significantly" to public understanding of government operations or activities.

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The existence and magnitude of a commercial interest: Whether the requester has a commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure, and, if so

n/a

The primary interest in disclosure: Whether the magnitude of the identified commercial interest of the requester is sufficiently large, in comparison with the public interest in disclosure, that disclosure is "primarily in the commercial interest of the requester."

n/a

Waiver Cost Information: I agree to pay
\$25

Expedited Processing: an imminent threat to the life or physical safety

n/a

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