

The Department of Energy's Office of Health, Safety and Security has recognized Washington River Protection Solutions for its outstanding safety program by awarding the company Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) Star status.

The Voluntary Protection Program recognizes excellence in occupational safety and health protection for contractors at Department of Energy sites. WRPS achieved Star status, the highest level of certification, based on the results of a two-week DOE-Headquarters assessment in February.

"We are pleased with the strides WRPS continues to make in enhancing safety at the tank farms," said **Tom Fletcher**, ORP assistant manager for the Tank Operations Contract. "WRPS has significantly improved its safety and health program, fostered additional employee involvement, and improved the relationship between managers and workers."

WRPS has more than 1,500 employees at Hanford. The company is responsible for safely managing the 56 million gallons of high-level radioactive and chemical waste stored in 177 underground tanks. The waste is the legacy of Cold War plutonium production.

"This well-deserved honor belongs to all WRPS employees, whose efforts have made the tank farms a safe place to work," said **Dave Olson**, WRPS president and project manager. "Our Employee Accident Prevention Councils, HAMTC Safety Representatives, and our Safety and Health staff work cooperatively to address workforce issues and encourage continuous improvement."

Events are being planned for the formal presentations of VPP Star flags to the EAPCs.

The Voluntary Protection Program was established in 1994 and is identical to the Occupational Health and Safety Administration Voluntary Protection Program, except that participation is open to contractors employed at Department of Energy-owned facilities.

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