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Contact:
John Britton
(509) 376-5561
John_c_britton@rl.gov

WRPS releases plan to improve chemical vapors management *Activities focus on further protecting tank farm workers at Hanford*

RICHLAND, Wash. – Washington River Protection Solutions (WRPS), the Hanford tank operations contractor for the U.S. Department of Energy Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP), today released a comprehensive implementation plan to address recent chemical vapor exposure concerns and further improve worker safety.

The plan was developed in response to recommendations by an expert panel in its *Hanford Tank Vapor Assessment Report* released in October 2014. The report outlines 10 overarching recommendations—encompassing 47 specific recommendations—to help reduce potential chemical vapor exposure to workers. The implementation plan released today specifically addresses these recommendations by identifying activities to be carried out over the coming months and years.

“We are continuously improving the worker protection program at Hanford’s tank farms,” said WRPS President and CEO Dave Olson. “Using the recommendations from the report, we developed specific actions we plan to implement in a sustained, multi-year, two-phased effort to further protect workers from potential exposure to chemical vapors. This plan represents a clear commitment to make that happen.”

Planned actions include improving sampling and detection technology, expanding sampling and characterization of the tank head space gases, increasing real-time monitoring, and evaluation and deployment of new abatement technologies.

A number of actions called for in the report and outlined in the plan have already been implemented—including use of personal respiratory protective gear—and several others are underway as part of the first phase. A WRPS project team will lead the implementation of actions outlined in the plan. Depending on information gathered and evaluated after the first phase, second-phase actions, costs, and schedules will be reviewed and, as needed, revised to reflect any new technical basis, as well as the ongoing incorporation of new technology and/or findings from research and development activities.

“We are confident that the steps outlined in this plan will improve the environment where we work and move us toward the next generation of tank farms where potential exposure to chemical vapors is further reduced,” Olson said.

WRPS recognizes that significantly reducing the potential for exposures to chemical vapors will take a sustained ongoing effort requiring action and continuous improvement beyond the recommendations addressed in the plan. In addition, a number of actions

outside the scope of this plan will, over time, significantly reduce the need for worker entries into the tank farms. Recent examples include installing wireless systems and completing a central control room to monitor the tanks around the clock. Other efforts will improve tank farm ventilation with additional exhausters and extension of exhaust stacks.

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