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## Field Remediation completes mercury amalgamation

In June, Field Remediation Project team members at the B/C field remediation site opened more than 100 carbon steel tubes that were unearthed during the two-year excavation of the 118-B-1 and C-1 burial ground.

“Documentation told us there could be up to 4,000 pounds of mercury in the area, but we didn’t know where we’d find it,” said Dean Strom, project engineer. “The tubes were moved into secondary containers and then to a staging area to determine what they contained.”



*Field Remediation Project team members work in level-B protective gear as a precaution against contaminants, such as mercury, found in carbon steel tubes.*

The 118-B-1 burial ground housed wastes primarily from B Reactor and from a tritium laboratory located at the site. The site was excavated by the Field Remediation Project to remove hazardous waste materials buried decades ago when the facilities were operated.

The four-week process of opening the tubes presented numerous risks, primarily the risk of exposing hazardous materials such as mercury. “There was a certain level of uncertainty in opening the tubes,” Dean said. “Mercury is heavy,

## Wildland fire season is here

The 2006 wildland fire season is fast approaching, and while wildland fires at Hanford are an annual concern, current forecasted conditions heighten the potential for a severe season.

Those of us who remember the summer of 2000 vividly recall the major fire that struck Hanford. To help prevent a similar occurrence, it is urgent that River Corridor Cleanup Project and subcontractor employees begin planning for certain fire prevention actions to lessen the potential for major fire damage.

Open burning on the Hanford Site is only permitted when authorized by the Hanford Fire Department's (HFD) fire marshal. No burning is allowed when the fire danger index is posted at high, very high or extreme. This restriction will remain in effect until the HFD determines fire danger conditions have lessened.

Off-road driving in areas where there is vegetation or natural fuel cover is restricted to those activities considered absolutely necessary and only in vehicles equipped with a means of communication, a portable fire extinguisher with at least a 2A rating and a shovel. Vehicles must not idle when parked off surfaced roadways unless they are diesel. The use of gas-powered vehicles is limited to those equipped with spark arresters and appropriate shielding for catalytic converters and mufflers.

The HFD should be notified immediately if a fire occurs, even if you believe it has been extinguished. The HFD can check the burn site for potential hot spots to prevent rekindling. For Hanford Site fire or medical emergencies, notify the HFD by calling 911 for on site telephones, or 373-3800 when using a cellular telephone.

Additional information on the wildland fire season can be found in a recently published "Take 5 for Safety" at [http://wch.erc.rl.gov/sh/LESSONS/Other/2006-06-19\\_Take\\_5.doc](http://wch.erc.rl.gov/sh/LESSONS/Other/2006-06-19_Take_5.doc)

For more information, contact Bob Lichfield at 372-9254.

weighing 112 to 113 pounds per gallon, but the weight of an unopened tube doesn't tell you how much, if any, mercury is inside."

Unsure of what the tubes contained, safety was a primary concern. Industrial hygiene and radiological control technicians were onsite at all times. A work area was set up behind a blast wall made of two-ton ecology blocks. A remotely operated saw cut an opening in each tube. Once the enclosed material was identified for color and consistency, workers drained the remaining liquid into a five-gallon bucket.

Team members in the work area wore level-B personal protective equipment with supplied air. The team originally worked nights to avoid the daytime heat, but switched outdoor work to 4-10 a.m. to avoid nighttime winds and the potential spread of contamination.

The tubes contained more than the expected mercury. The team found oily substances, clear liquids and fibrous materials that will be analyzed before disposal.

Mercury is a highly reactive material with limited methods of disposal, so it was mixed with roughly equal parts zinc to form an amalgamate before disposal at ERDF. The amalgamate is placed in eight-gallon containers where it partially hardens and crusts over. The amalgamation process was completed last week. The drums will be transported to ERDF where they will be grouted in place.



*Keith Tarr of subcontractor Federal Engineers and Constructors operates the remote saw from the surveillance trailer before workers drain unidentified materials from the tubes excavated from the site.*

## New on-line form helps coordinate new employee processing

An on-line form is available on the Washington Closure Hanford web page (<http://wch.erc.rl/gov/messages/erc.asp>) for coordinating key new employee support activities.

The new Personnel Notification Request Form can be used to schedule HGET, request computer and network accounts, notify dosimetry, assign office space and enter a new employee's name into the main personnel data bases.

The form includes a link to the badge request form, which eventually will be merged. In the interim, badge requests must be completed separately and emailed to ^WCH Office Services or faxed to the Reception desk at 375-4644.

To ensure complete setup of computers, facilities and services, a Personnel Notification Request Form should be completed at least one week before the planned arrival of the new employee, ROS, agency, subcontractor or visiting personnel. Minimal services (badging, HGET, BLAN account) can be provided with a two-work-day lead time.

The new form should not be used to authorize additional personnel or to request a one-to-seven day temporary or building specific badge. You should continue to use WCH-HR-012 and email the form to ^WCH Office Services or fax it to the reception desk at 375-4644 for these needs.

For more information, contact Trish Marquez at 375-4640 or Tim Quinn at 372-9439. For questions about or problems with the notification form or process, contact Ora Anthis at 375-4679.

## Correction

The phone number for Dave Reeve, The LSIT Howler, was incorrect in the last *Current*. His correct phone number is 539-2645.

# Mike Dickinson named Employee Concerns Program manager

Mike Dickinson is the new Employee Concerns Program (ECP) manager. He succeeds Tim Quinn, who is working as the Security and Emergency Management manager.

Mike has worked at Hanford since 1980. For nine years, he worked in and managed the Employee Concerns Program at Westinghouse Hanford and Fluor Hanford.

Mike reports to Bill Shingler, Project Services director, and has full access to Pat Pettiette to ensure the appropriate level of management attention is given to resolving concerns.

"I look forward to renewing my association with the Employee Concerns Program," Mike said. "I have worked in and managed Employee Concerns Programs for other Hanford contractors so I'm very familiar with the available processes to use in resolving employee concerns."

The ECP provides a framework to identify report and resolve employee concerns related to safety, health, environment, security, quality, waste, fraud and abuse.

Employees are encouraged to contact their managers as soon as a concern is identified since immediate management involvement is the most effective means of resolving concerns.

"If an employee is reluctant, for whatever reason, to use line management in attempting to resolve issues, then the Employee Concerns Program can be an effective avenue for them," Mike said.

Employees are encouraged to contact the Washington Closure Hanford ECP if they do not receive a satisfactory response from their managers, if they fear retaliation or harassment for raising a concern, or if they wish to request anonymity or confidentiality.

Employees can complete the WCH Notice of Employee Concern Form (WCH-ECP-001) or call the ECP 24-hour recorded Hot Line at 372-9542. Messages left at that number are accessed only by Mike or a delegated representative. To reach Mike directly, call 372-9231 or 302-7075.



*Mike Dickinson has joined the River Corridor Closure Project team as the manager of the Employee Concerns Program.*

## Ideas that work

*Editor's note: This feature will appear periodically to provide information to improve your communication with others.*

### Why we don't hear others

If you want to listen so you really hear what others say, make sure you're not a:

- **Mind reader.** You'll hear little or nothing as you think "what is this person really thinking or feeling."
- **Rehearser.** Your mental tryouts for "Here's what I'll say next" tune out the speaker.
- **Filterer.** Some call this selective listening – hearing only what you want to hear.
- **Dreamer.** Drifting off during a face-to-face conversation can lead to an embarrassing "What did you say" or "Could you repeat that?"
- **Identifier.** If you refer everything you hear to your experience, you probably didn't really hear what was said.
- **Comparer.** When you get side-tracked assessing the messenger, you're sure to miss the message.
- **Derailer.** Changing the subject too quickly tells others you're not interested in anything they have to say.
- **Sparrer.** You hear what's said but quickly belittle it or discount it. That puts you in the same class as the derailer.
- **Placater.** Agreeing with everything you hear just to be nice or to avoid conflict does not mean you're a good listener.

*Source: Communication Briefings, Vol. XXII, No. 1; The Writing Lab, Department of English, Purdue University Press, 1356 Heavilon Hall, West Lafayette, IN 47907.*

### Comments or questions?

Please call Edye Jenkins at 372-9176

Or you may Email:

wchnews@wch-rcc.com

# Signs of the times

Many of the 300 Area buildings may be gone but they won't be forgotten, thanks to the D4 Project team.

The team is hanging the signs of the facilities it demolishes along the perimeter fence on Route 4 – 28 buildings since the River Corridor Project started last August. A total of 210 buildings in the 300 Area will be removed by the RCC Project team.



The signs recognize the D4 Project team's work as well as the important role the buildings had during World War II and the Cold War.

## Get ready to picnic

Swap your packed lunch for a picnic Aug. 5, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m., at the first annual River Corridor Employee Association's (RCEA) Employee Picnic at the Howard Amon Park by the Fingernail. All River Corridor Project employees and their immediate families are invited.

"The RCEA organized the picnic to carry on past traditions and celebrate summer in a family-friendly way," said Lynette Bennett, RCEA vice president of activities.

The event offers a menu of hamburgers, hot dogs and barbecue chicken, along with live entertainment and a series of games and prizes for all ages. "We've planned a pie-eating contest, sack races and maybe a watermelon seed spitting contest. There will be lots of other activities such as face painting and an inflatable obstacle course for the kids," Lynette said.

Employees interested in attending can sign up with picnic representatives (below). Costs are \$1 per person ages three and up (\$5 maximum per immediate family), and \$10 for all other non-RCC employees.

At the picnic, employees can enter their names in a drawing for a chance to win door prizes such as gift cards, local excursion packages and a vacation travel package for two. Employees must be present to win.

The picnic is the first of many events organized by the RCEA for all River Corridor employees to enjoy. "We're trying to meet employees' varied interests in at least one event every month," said Rob Miller, RCEA president. The group organized a golf tournament in July and the picnic in August. The tentative schedule includes wine tasting in September, a Seahawks game in October, a shopping excursion in November and the tree-lighting ceremony in Leavenworth in December.

Employees interested in helping to organize these events can contact Lynette at 531-5974 or [lynette.bennett@wch-rcc.com](mailto:lynette.bennett@wch-rcc.com).

Sign up today with one of the following picnic representatives:

100F	Heather Murchison	<a href="mailto:hdmurchi@wch-rcc.com">hdmurchi@wch-rcc.com</a>	438-7451
100N	Mary Brown	<a href="mailto:mkbrown@wch-rcc.com">mkbrown@wch-rcc.com</a>	373-9657
ERDF	Nancy Brower	<a href="mailto:nebrower@wch-rcc.com">nebrower@wch-rcc.com</a>	373-1447
300	Betty Andresen	<a href="mailto:baandres@wch-rcc.com">baandres@wch-rcc.com</a>	373-5445
Sigma	Marilyn Jones	<a href="mailto:mfjones@wch-rcc.com">mfjones@wch-rcc.com</a>	375-9424
HSII	Valerie Larson	<a href="mailto:valarson@wch-rcc.com">valarson@wch-rcc.com</a>	372-9489
HSIII	Lori Huntley	<a href="mailto:ldhuntle@wch-rcc.com">ldhuntle@wch-rcc.com</a>	372-9131