

Fiscal Year 2017

Chemical Vapors Communication Activities

Quarterly Report #1

October – December 2016



washington **river**
protection solutions

An AECOM-led company with Atkins and AREVA



Introduction

Washington River Protection Solutions (WRPS) is committed to the timely and transparent release of information related to chemical vapors in the Hanford tank farms. The information in this report represents an accounting of WRPS' efforts to increase engagement with the workforce and stakeholders on the chemical vapors issue.

In support of furthering Department of Energy (DOE) mission goals, WRPS has and will continue to pursue a variety of vapors-related initiatives. By increasing awareness of those goals, and the progress made toward meeting them, WRPS aims to bring greater understanding of chemical vapor hazards and how those risks are mitigated. Worker involvement and feedback is a key aspect in communications planning and delivery.

WRPS relies on a number of tools to inform workers and stakeholders on the topic of chemical vapors protection and strategy. Those tools include, but are not limited to:

- Employee meetings
- All-employee email messages
- Weekly newsletter articles
- Regular posts to the [Hanford vapors website](#)
- Participation in the employee-driven Chemical Vapors Solutions Team (CVST) and various subcommittees
- Public meetings
- Tours

By communicating openly and often through a variety of means, WRPS intends to create an understanding of what is happening, where we are going in the area of vapors and chemical protection initiatives and what it means to our employees, our families and our community.

In this report: Fiscal Year 2017 – 1st Quarter highlights

- Hanford Advisory Board visits AP Farm
- WRPS rolls out new web-based tools, improved vapors website
- DOE Office of Inspector General report released
- New protective gear tested by team of employees
- NIOSH report on chemical vapors management released
- DOE applauds WRPS' efforts to improve web-based communication
- Retrieval operations resume in double-shell tank AY-102 with vapors control strategy in place

About us

Washington River Protection Solutions is a limited liability corporation owned by AECOM and Atkins, with AREVA as its primary subcontractor. The company's mission is to reduce the environmental risk posed by 56 million gallons of radioactive and chemical waste stored in 177 underground tanks near the center of the 586-square-mile Hanford Site in southeastern Washington state. For more, visit www.wrpstoc.com.

October 2016

- The Hanford Advisory Board's (HAB) Tank Waste Committee was given a tour of AP Farm, where [chemical vapor detection and monitoring technologies are being pilot tested](#), the Central Control Room located in 274-AW, and the [RJ Lee mobile laboratory](#). The tour was conducted by Chief Technology Officer Karthik Subramanian and Chemical Vapor Integration Manager Rob Gregory.



HAB Tank Waste Committee tour of AP Farm



Event Notification System

- Pilot testing of a new [Event Notification System](#) was conducted. The system is designed to improve worker notifications in the tank farms and guide employees to safe locations.
- WRPS launched the new and expanded www.HanfordVapors.com website. The site, which includes new content developed by a cross-section of workers who are leaders in their fields of expertise, provides more information about chemical vapors at the Hanford Site. Available tools include access to [field data and sampling results](#), more complete information as to [how WRPS protects workers](#), and an explanation of [technologies being developed and tested](#).
- Local labor union leaders toured the AP Farm and were briefed by Chief Technology Officer Karthik Subramanian on [vapor technology pilot testing](#).
- An all-employee FY 2017 Safety Kickoff and luncheon was held for WRPS, staff augmentation and subcontractor employees. WRPS President and Project Manager Mark Lindholm, ESH&Q Manager Rob Cantwell and Chemical Protection Integration Manager Rob Gregory addressed employees.
- WRPS President and Project Manager Mark Lindholm sent a message to employees thanking them for a successful year. The messages included references and callouts to specific projects that helped enhance worker protection in relation to potential chemical vapors exposure.

Web posts/updates

- [Vapors Weekly Update – October 5](#)
- [WRPS expands web-based tools on chemical vapors](#)
- [Vapors Weekly Update – October 13](#)
- [Updated data on WMDS pilot-scale testing](#)
- [Vapors Weekly Update – October 20](#)
- [Vapors Weekly Update – October 27](#)

Chemical Vapors Solutions Team (CVST) meetings

Oct. 19
Oct. 26

CVST communications subcommittee meetings

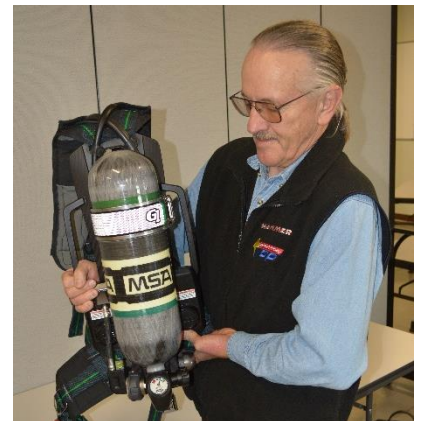
Oct. 5
Oct. 26
Oct. 31

November 2016

- The HAMMER Medical Surveillance Subcommittee was briefed on the [respiratory cartridge filter testing program](#) by Chemical Vapor Integration Manager Rob Gregory.
- A message to employees was distributed on an [AOP-015 at the AX Farm change tent](#) where six workers reported odors.
- A message to employees was distributed after [a federal judge rejected a motion to remove the State of Washington from a lawsuit](#) filed by the attorney general related to chemical vapors.
- A message to employees was distributed after [a federal judge denied a motion for preliminary injunction](#) filed by the attorney general, Hanford Challenge and Local 598 to implement additional interim measures in Hanford's tank farms to protect workers from chemical vapors.
- A message to employees was distributed detailing the findings of the [DOE Office of Inspector General \(OIG\) report on chemical vapor concerns in the tank farms](#). The OIG review "did not reveal significant issues with regard to the Department's and WRPS' strategy and ongoing actions to address vapor risks." The message identified three recommendations WRPS will implement: strengthen the Problem Evaluation Request (PER) system, share ongoing engineering control evaluation reports, and sustain a strong safety culture by using the Chemical Vapors Solutions Team (CVST) for employees to raise safety concerns.
- Industrial Hygiene Communication Boards containing aerial views of tank farms showing hazards and monitoring points were implemented for use in work planning and pre-job briefings. All employees have access to the boards through information kiosks on the Hanford Local Area Network.
- New self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) equipment was tested at HAMMER for potential use in the tank farms. The equipment, consisting of four models, was selected based on employee recommendations.



Chemical cartridge filters for air-purifying respirators



SCBA equipment

Web posts/updates:

- [Vapors Weekly Update – November 3](#)
- [Clarification on today's court decision](#)
- [Video: The Hanford Story – Tank Waste Cleanup](#)
- [Vapors Weekly Update – November 10](#)
- [OIG special report on chemical vapors now available](#)
- [Court ruling on preliminary injunction](#)
- [OP-FTIR Weekly Report \(Oct. 5-12, 2016\)](#)
- [AOP015 DRI 05032016 Buffalo](#)
- [Vapors Weekly Update – November 30](#)
- [Odors reported at AX change tent – November 30](#)

Chemical Vapors Solutions
Team (CVST) meetings
Nov. 9
Nov. 21

CVST communications
subcommittee meetings
Nov. 14
Nov. 28

December 2016

- The [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's \(NIOSH\) report on chemical vapors management](#) was made available. A message to employees and newsletter article explained the four areas reviewed – exposure assessment, exposure control, safety and health management, and medical – and the NIOSH recommendations for improvements.
- A message to employees was distributed after [three workers reported smelling odors outside of a tank farm](#) in an area that does not require respiratory protection. The odors were later found not to be from the tank farms.
- The second phase of new SCBA equipment testing was completed at HAMMER. Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council (HAMTC) workers evaluated the four SCBA models for potential use in the tank farms.
- The full HAB was briefed by DOE Office of River Protection Manager Kevin Smith on the new www.HanfordVapors.com, which he called a “phenomenal improvement” over the old website.
- All Hanford employees were briefed on the [Vapor Control Strategy for AY-102 waste retrieval](#). Briefings were held for other Hanford contractor employees as well as WRPS workers.
- The AY-102 retrieval team declared readiness to begin the next phase waste removal from the tank. Retrieval operations resumed and weekly updates of AY-102 retrieval provided to employees. The updates include information on the Chemical Vapor Management Strategy employed during retrieval.



A WRPS employee tests SCBA



WRPS ESH&Q Manager Rob Cantwell briefs employees on the AY-102 vapor control strategy

Web posts/updates:

- [NIOSH report on tank vapors now available](#)
- [Odors reported – December 1](#)
- [New VMDS pilot-scale testing data sets](#)
- [Vapors Weekly Update – December 7](#)
- [AY-102 retrieval information page](#)
- [Vapors Weekly Update – December 21](#)
- [Preliminary report on cartridge filter testing](#)
- [Vapors Weekly Update – December 29](#)
- [Response to DOE Office of Inspector General](#)
- [Proposed technologies for addressing chemical vapors](#)