

Evidence Links DOE Official To Whistleblower Walter Tamosaitis' Removal From Hanford Job Assignment

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Kennewick, WA. On July 2, 2010, Dr. Tamosaitis was removed from his position at Hanford, escorted off the Hanford property, and is currently assigned to a basement office performing no meaningful work. Dr. Tamosaitis has sued Bechtel and URS alleging that he was retaliated against for whistleblowing. His complaint (below) alleges that just before his removal, he called into question whether Bechtel met a contract milestone that resulted in a multi-million dollar bonus. Emails recently obtained from URS in pretrial discovery show that on July 1, 2010, a day after Bechtel claimed the work was done supporting the bonus, DOE Manager Dale Knutson, was in discussions with Bechtel Manager Frank Russo in which Russo criticized Dr. Tamosaitis' concerns over the WTP. Russo wrote, "Walt is killing us." See email exchanges below. In response to an email written by Dr. Tamosaitis discussing his concerns about WTP, Knutson wrote to Russo,

"If this shows up in the press we will be sticking to our previous comment . . . Deliberate haste will be our approach."

Bechtel and URS were hired by the DOE to design and build the Hanford Waste Treatment Plant, which will be an industrial complex of facilities for separating and vitrifying (immobilizing in glass) millions of gallons of high-level nuclear tank waste stored in 177 large underground tanks on the Hanford site.

DOE has stated that it intends to begin building the plant before the design is completed to meet time goals. Mr. Tamosaitis is investigating whether the "deliberate haste" is related to this DOE approach.

Vitrification technology involves blending the high-level nuclear tank waste with glass-forming materials and heating it to over 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit. The mixture is then poured into stainless steel canisters to cool and solidify. In this glass form, the high-level nuclear tank waste is currently considered stable and impervious to the environment, and its radioactivity will dissipate over hundreds or thousands of years.

Click [here](#) to view copy of "Walt is killing us" email string with DOE comment

Click [here](#) to view copy of email string between Russo and Knudson stating, "I directed URS to get Walt out of here 2 weeks ago. . . ."

Click [here](#) to see DOE Knudson Declaration

Click [here](#) to view a copy of the complaint filed in Benton County Superior Court.

Click [here](#) to view a copy of the broadened DOL complaint which is being investigated by OSHA.