



PRESS RELEASE

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HANFORD VAPORS SETTLEMENT MODIFIED AND EXTENDED THROUGH FEBRUARY 1, 2028

A Commitment to Enhance Safety, Transparency, and Accountability

Seattle, WA: [Hanford Challenge](#) and the [United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters Local Union 598](#) (UA Local 598) today announced an extension and modification to the settlement agreement reached from a 2015 case involving the safety of workers from toxic vapor-related exposures at the Hanford nuclear site in southeastern WA.

The [settlement agreement](#) is modified in two main ways, including:

- **Increased Transparency.** Hanford nuclear site and its contractors will make online postings to increase transparency and accountability. These online postings will include current AOP-15 and C-67 procedures, annual procedure changes (if any), monthly Action Requests, and Event Investigation Reports for vapor-related events.
- **An Extension of Time to Implement Engineering Controls.** The settlement agreement is extended through February 1, 2028. This extension is necessary to allow more time for testing and implementing engineering controls to protect worker health and safety. Hanford Challenge and Local 598 are hopeful that the additional time will ultimately eliminate the risk of toxic vapor exposures vis-à-vis engineering controls.

“This agreement ensures that Hanford workers, Hanford Challenge, UA Local 598, and the public are notified of vapor exposures in a timely manner while we wait for engineering controls to be implemented in the tank farms,” said Nikolas Peterson, Executive Director of Hanford Challenge, a non-profit organization that works to create a future for the Hanford Nuclear Site that secures human health and safety, advances accountability, and promotes a sustainable environmental

legacy. “We are hopeful that the renewed commitments will ultimately prevent vapor exposures and lead to a future for Hanford that prioritizes safety and accountability in cleanup efforts,” Peterson continued.

Nickolas Bumpaous, Business Manager of UA Local 598 said, “The working men and women of Hanford bring their skills, labor, and commitment to work with them every day. Our Brothers and Sisters are tasked with protecting the health of our Nation and they, above all else, deserve honesty. This agreement represents our priority of transparency for our community and reaffirms our expectation for innovation and deployment of expanded engineering controls at the tank farms.”

Implementing engineering controls will make tank farm work at Hanford much safer, preventing harmful chemicals from entering the worker's breathing space, by capturing and treating the vapors. Although more time is needed than originally anticipated, the engineering controls, worker protections, and enhanced accountability within the settlement agreement and its modification are promising steps forward.

Hanford Challenge strongly encourages all Hanford workers to monitor the updated vapor website (www.HanfordVapors.com) and contact them with any questions or concerns. Especially if a worker hears about a vapor exposure that does not make it on the website.

Background: In an action brought in federal court, UA Local 598 and Hanford Challenge were co-plaintiffs with the WA State Attorney General (Complainants) against the US Department of Energy (DOE) and Hanford contractor Washington River Protection Solutions (WRPS) (Defendants). Ultimately, the parties reached a settlement agreement announced in September 2018. Upon its lapse in 2022, the parties have worked together to reach a settlement agreement modification and extend the agreement through February 1, 2028.

Read the [2023 Settlement Agreement](#).

Read the August 27, 2021 [Press Statement re: Toxic Vapor Exposures at Hanford](#).

Read the original September 19, 2018 [Press Release re: Hanford Vapor Settlement Agreement](#).

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