

DOE/NNSA Cites Los Alamos National Laboratory for Price Anderson Violations

For Immediate Release

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WASHINGTON, DC The Department of Energy's (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) has issued a Preliminary Notice of Violation to the University of California, the contractor for the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), for violations of nuclear safety rules and procedures involving the storage of nuclear waste materials.

The violations did not result in actual harm to workers or the public. DOE/NNSA took this action because, if not corrected, the violations could have led to the continued storage of transuranic (TRU) waste without analyzing all of the hazards, development of required safety controls to protect workers and the public, and proper authorization by the DOE/NNSA. TRU waste contains radioactive material in a form and quantity that, if not properly controlled, may cause harm to workers or the public.

The DOE/NNSA also took this action because the TRU waste storage conditions were in violation of nuclear safety rules for a period of several years and the contractor failed to promptly identify and correct the conditions. The DOE/NNSA considered this a significant failure of the Laboratory's self-assessment and corrective action management processes.

LANL is exempt from civil penalty by statute and no civil penalty can be issued in association with the current PNOV. If not exempt, a civil penalty of \$220,000 would have been assessed, based on the significance of the violations.

The Price-Anderson Amendments Act of 1988 authorizes the Energy Department to undertake regulatory actions against contractors for violations of its nuclear safety requirements. The enforcement program is designed to have contractors correct procedural violations to prevent more serious events from occurring.

Additional details on this and other enforcement actions are available on the Internet at <http://www.eh.doe.gov/enforce>.

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