

From: Julia M <jmontagnet@gmail.com>
To: <andrewt@dnfsb.gov>
Date: 7/19/2011 4:33 PM
Subject: Comment regarding Waste Treatment Plant's Safety Culture

This comment is in response to recommendations made by the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board to the Secretary of Energy concerning the safety culture at the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant located at the Hanford site in the state of Washington.

I support the DNFSB's recommendation that safety become a priority in the work done on the Waste Treatment Plant. As someone who has watched the story unfold on the Walt Tamoisitis case, I believe that Bechtel is more interested in making a profit for their company than in doing a truly good job on this project. An example would be, if I hired a contractor to build a second story deck on my house and I promised him a fee plus a bonus if he were able to finish the job before the first day of summer. Of course he would want to finish it in time to receive the bonus, but I would rather he do an excellent job and follow proper building codes than finish by the first day of summer. I would expect the contractor I hired to have the moral and ethics to know that if he could not do the safest job possible in time, he would have to skip receiving the bonus. Otherwise, I would be very angry if he did a shoddy job in order to finish earlier, received the bonus, and my deck fell down within the next few years because of his negligent, hurried workmanship. Then to have the incident followed up by excuses why it wasn't his fault - that would make the situation even worse. This is not the moral standard of companies that should be working for our country.

That example is exactly how I feel about Bechtel. I am essentially paying them because they are paid by our tax money through the Department of Energy. I am not happy that my tax money is going toward paying a company that would do negligent, hurried work on something as important and potentially dangerous as the storage of nuclear waste, just so their company can receive millions of dollars in bonuses. This kind of behavior from a contractor to the government, and with support from certain employees of the government at the Department of Energy is egregious and I do not support my tax money being used to support such corruption. I would suggest that an overhaul of the whole system is in order. As citizens and tax payers here in the U.S. we all deserve that the companies hired by our government be morally and ethically sound and have a strong, American work ethic at their core. Companies who do not value excellent workmanship and whose bottom line is not doing a good job, is not using the highest safety standards to protect our citizens, have no right to be paid with our tax money. And the people employed by the government who help to keep this kind of behavior by contractors going have no right working as employee of our country. There need to be changes made now!

Sincerely,
Julia Montagnet