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NRC NEWS

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NRC REACHES SETTLEMENT WITH CHEVRON ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMPANY IN DISCRIMINATION CASE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has reached a settlement with Chevron Environmental Management Co. (CEMC) over the apparent termination of a contract radiation safety employee who raised safety concerns during the decommissioning of the former Molycorp Inc. facility in Washington, Pa.

A Confirmatory Order, issued July 8, outlines the agreement, which was reached through the NRC's alternative dispute resolution process. CEMC has agreed to implement a number of actions at the site, including training supervisors about employees' rights to raise safety concerns; communicating the company's policy and management expectations about employees' rights to raise concerns, and surveying employees about their willingness to raise safety concerns.

The NRC's Office of Investigations determined that the individual was fired after raising nuclear safety concerns regarding the transportation of potentially contaminated soil samples over public roads and the monitoring of potentially radioactive airborne dust caused by work at the site. The NRC notified CEMC of the investigation results on Feb. 28, and CEMC and the NRC decided to use the NRC's alternative dispute resolution process. As part of the agreement, the NRC will not pursue further enforcement action related to this issue.

The Molycorp facility operated from 1964 to 1970, producing an iron alloy from ore that contained natural thorium and uranium. Mildly radioactive thorium slag was used as ground fill throughout the 17-acre site.

CEMC is the successor organization to Molycorp and is cleaning up the site, now known as the Washington, Pa., Decommissioning Site. The license was transferred to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania March 31, when Pennsylvania became an NRC Agreement State and took over the regulation of radioactive material within the state.

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