WASHINGTON, D.C. – The U.S. Department of Energy has issued a Preliminary Notice of Violation (PNOV) to Bechtel National, Incorporated (BNI) for two material handling incidents that occurred on July 16, 2010, and March 16, 2011, at the Hanford Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant (WTP) Project. The PNOV cites three violations of the Department’s worker safety and health regulations. The Department has proposed a $150,000 civil penalty.

In the first material handling incident on July 16, 2010, a millwright sustained a severe foot injury. The second incident, on March 16, 2011, involved improper rigging of equipment needed to lift and move a panel of formwork that weighed over 5,000 pounds.

The PNOV cites two Severity Level I violations and one Severity Level II violation of 10 C.F.R. Part 851, Worker Safety and Health Program, which governs worker safety and health within DOE. A Severity Level I violation is one that could result in the death or serious injury of a worker. A Severity Level II violation is one that is less serious but could threaten worker health and safety. The violations in the PNOV were in the areas of hazard identification, hazard prevention and abatement, procedural compliance, and employee training and information.

Since these two incidents, BNI has modified its work planning practices, employee and supervisor safety training, and management oversight of field activities in order to better perform its work activities in the dynamically changing construction environment at WTP. The Energy Department granted partial mitigation of the proposed civil penalty based on these corrective actions.

The Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 authorizes the Department to take enforcement actions when contractors violate worker safety and health requirements. The Department’s Enforcement Program encourages contractors to identify and correct worker safety and health deficiencies at an early stage, before they lead to more serious events.

Additional details on this and other enforcement actions are available on the Office of Enforcement and Oversight website at www.hss.doe.gov/enforce.