

Date Wed, 08 Dec 1999 153330 -0700
From Meredith Brown <racer@lanl.gov>

Subject: Yellow Alert- Insects in Respirator Bags

Title: Yellow Alert- Insects in Respirator Bags

Date November 29, 1999 Identifier 1999-RL-HNF-0049

Lessons Learned Statement- Insects can occasionally be found in sealed plastic respirator bags.

Discussion of Activities- On two separate occasions (10/14/99 and 10/21/99) employees found insects in sealed respirator bags. One employee was bitten by what appeared to be a spider and required medical attention. In the second instance, the insect appeared to be a dead fly so no injury occurred.

Analysis- Respirators are cleaned and disinfected prior to being placed in plastic bags and then boxes for shipment to the site. It is still unknown how these insects entered the plastic bags prior to being sealed. Site representatives met with the respirator cleaning contractor to determine how this could have occurred and how to prevent it from recurring. The contractor is temporarily modifying its process for cleaning respirators to reduce the possibility of bugs remaining in respirators when they are bagged.

Recommended Actions- Employees are advised to inspect their respirators very carefully before donning them. Inspect under the rubber portions of the respirator in case the insects have secreted themselves there. Direct any problems to your project safety professional and respiratory protection coordinator. This information has been distributed through Site respirator issuers, the Hanford Respirator Committee, Safety Points-of-Contact, HAMMER, and the national respirator listserv in addition to this DOE Lessons Learned listserv. The same company cleans respirators at other DOE Sites so widespread distribution is appropriate.

Priority Descriptor YELLOW/Caution

DOE Functional Category Occupational Safety and Health

Hanford Functional Categories N/A

Work Activity Radiological Work

Hazard Plants/Animals/Insects

ISM Core Function Develop/Implement Controls

Originator Fluor Daniel Hanford, Inc.

Contact Project Hanford Lessons Learned Coordinator; (509) 373-7664; FAX 376-5243

E-mail- PHMC_Lessons_Learned@rl.gov or T. C. (Cliff) Ledford (509) 373-5214

Authorized Derivative Classifier Roger Terry (509) 372-3343

Reviewing Official John Bickford

Keywords insects, respirators, bugs, bite

References N/A