

DOE News Release

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Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project Employees Achieve Record-Setting Safety Performance

Employees at the U.S. Department of Energy's Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project have worked 5 million hours without a lost-time injury.

That's a record for safe sustained work at Idaho National Laboratory. It is also a mark that only a very few companies within the Department of Energy complex have ever achieved.

Elizabeth Sellers, DOE Idaho Operations manager, said, "The staff at AMWTP has reached a monumental safety accomplishment, which has enabled them to safely ship more transuranic nuclear waste to the Department's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico than any other DOE facility."

The AMWTP safety streak began in December, 2003. Five million hours equates to more than 1,233 days. Making this safety record even more impressive is that AMWTP's operations take place 24-hours a day, seven days a week. The last lost work injury at the plant happened when an employee tripped.

Bechtel BWXT Idaho manages and operates the AMWTP for DOE. President and General Manager Paul Divjak attributed the record breaking safety performance to an attitude of the workforce. "We're dedicated to the concept that all accidents are preventable and we are committed to achieving and sustaining a zero accident performance," Divjak said. "This is a world-class safety milestone and a tremendous accomplishment that all of our workforce can be proud of."

AMWTP is among the leaders for businesses that perform waste treatment and disposal operations. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, waste treatment companies have a lost time accident rate of 2.8 accidents per 100 full-time employees, or every 200,000 hours of operations. AMWTP's lost time accident rate for the past three years is 0.0.

"A safe work environment is critical to the success of AMWTP," said Divjak. "After all, while shipping radioactive waste out of Idaho is important, so, too, is ensuring our employees safely return to their families and friends at the end of each work day."

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