Fluor has Actively Responded, Offered Assistance and Fully Cooperated in Investigation of 1997 Chemical Incident at Plutonium Reclamation Facility

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Fluor Corporation, parent of the contractor responsible for overseeing the ongoing cleanup of the Department of Energy's Hanford Reservation in Richland, Washington, have reacted with surprise to a lawsuit that was filed Friday.

Company officials said they found the lawsuit surprising because, since 1997 when a vat containing a small amount of non-radioactive chemicals ruptured without causing any injuries, Fluor has offered many avenues of assistance, cooperation and communication to workers, some of whom apparently now allege they may have been negatively affected in some manner. The company continues to make medical evaluation services available, although no workers were in direct contact with the chemicals when the after-hours rupture occurred.

Fluor's attempts to assist the workers have included offers of fully paid medical examinations, including second- and third-opinion referrals to some of the most highly regarded medical centers in the world, meetings and discussions to address their concerns, and pledges of full cooperation with any of their representatives.

Since there were no deaths or injuries from the rupture, and safety officials from local governmental agencies, the federal government, and Fluor itself conducted thorough investigations following the incident, company officials continue to believe they have taken appropriate, reasonable and responsive actions to meet any possible needs of workers.

Only when Washington State's statute of limitations has drawn near has an out-of-state law firm, which is based in Minnesota, filed this lawsuit. It should also be noted that although Fluor officials have communicated with the law firm, there has been no communication since September 1998.

Fluor officials reiterated that the incident, which did not involve any plutonium or other radioactive materials, was extensively investigated. Detailed reports on that investigation have been, and continue to be, available to the public.

Officials also wanted to emphasize that the services and assistance offered to the allegedly affected workers remain available to them in the same manner as they have been available since 1997.

Fluor Corporation releases are available on Fluor's Corporate News on the Net site at http://www.businesswire.com/cnn/flr.htm .

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