

Department of Energy Jennifer Granholm “All Hands” video of August 13, 2021, establishing her expectations for a Safety Conscious Work Environment (SCWE) in the Department of Energy

Video URL: <https://youtu.be/pSE4fRHpo7E>

Transcript (slightly edited for clarity):

Hello, I'm Secretary Jennifer Granholm.

We have a lot of priorities at the Department of Energy - from combating climate change and creating clean energy jobs to promoting energy security and protecting our nuclear stockpile. Each one of these missions demands that our approach be safe and secure.

Our workforce, as the communities and the tribal nations that surround our sites - and the environment itself - all depend on us to perform our work in the safest manner possible. Each one of us has a part to play, not only in following the safety and security measures that we have at the department, but in identifying and voicing opportunities to enhance those measures.

Constant vigilance is essential as well as a desire for continuous improvement in support of organizational excellence. And that is why we have to work together to foster a Safety Conscious Work Environment or SCWE, where employees actually feel free to raise concerns without fear of retaliation.

And that means all employees - workers with ideas or concerns about safety challenges and opportunities, or engineers that may be raising a red flag about safety or security at a site, or - even a senior leader that may be bringing a potential issue of mismanagement directly to me.

Everybody has to feel secure and comfortable about speaking with their leadership. The administration's expectations for leaders are clear. We have to be honest. We have to display humility. We have to treat people with respect and dignity, and take responsibility. We have to be accountable and we have to rely on the expertise of our teams.

Leaders have to listen carefully to employees who are raising issues, we have to respond to their concerns, we have to engage them in an effort to determine a solution, and then offer them feedback. At the same time, employees have to be ready and willing to participate in planning and in improvement initiatives.

Together, we'll continue to build an environment and a culture where our colleagues are rewarded - and not reprimanded - when they come forward with a concern. We want to build a culture where people feel personal responsibility for their actions. Most importantly, we want to build a culture where safe performance of work is internalized as an overriding element to our mission.

Remember, at the Department of Energy, safety and security is everybody's responsibility!