

Does blowing the whistle violate company loyalty?

No, a person who is a whistleblower is most likely one who has strong moral values and character. This person could have been hired by the company to do a specific safety job and in doing so they may uncover an issue that needs to be dealt with. This is especially true if the matter at hand is a serious environmental issue. This person may try to discuss and handle the problem internally first and by going to an immediate supervisor within the company. If this doesn't work, and they may go above their inner most layer if a serious issue is not being dealt with. They are still acting in an appropriate manner toward the company. They are being loyal to the job for which they were hired. They are being competent. They also know the ramifications of several things, the issue is too serious to ignore. If I ignore it as they are telling me to, we could all be exposed with radiation or have some other serious health or environment risk. If I do as they say, they will be able to fire me for not doing my job.

If a person is doing this they are not acting in a manner disloyal to the company. They are being completely on the level with the company, it is the company management that is being selfish and disloyal, to the company, themselves, to the environment and to those exposed by the radiation or any other serious issue that harms peoples lives, other species of life and the environment.

I promise I won't turn every homework assignment into a story about my brother, but I would like to share more details of what happened in his whistle blowing case. It took a lot of guts, strength of character and stamina to do what he did. I am still amazed that coworkers and supervisors did not take high radiation levels seriously, as though it wouldn't affect them personally. Adam had been involved in a case at Millstone Nuclear Power Plant (currently known as Dominion) in Niantic, CT. I spoke with him today to make sure I had all the details correct and this is his story.

Adam McNiece, was a Radiation Protection Technologist, "You're fighting the invisible menace. You need a meter, if you go around without one you can get overexposed". In order to be an RPT you must be certified with the NATIONAL REGISTRY OF RADIATION PROTECTION TECHNOLOGISTS. A person who takes this test can get up to 30 college credits. Adam has passed this exam. Adam's supervisors were made to take the exam and they failed it.

Adam was in a building called the safeguards building. It is 60 feet below ground. It is all encased materials and no one goes there except for testing. He thought to himself "Why would there be exposure there?" It was his job to test for radiation levels at the plant. I'm not sure where else but I would assume plant wide people are suppose to be running these tests.

He wrote it up and gave it to his supervisor. The supervisor told him to redo the survey and not show it. He said to himself, "I either write it up as I find it or I get declared incompetent for missing it." He went to the supervisor above his immediate one. The next day he was laid off, they said it was a RIF and his job was no longer there. He tried to go back and get a lesser job that they were hiring for and he believes they kept creating new rules to keep him out. He had 10 years experience.

His next course of action after being laid off was he made an administrative complaint because he knew the high radiation level still needed to be dealt with. He went to the NRC. Adam said, "Let the government get in and make them fix it". They will only take care of the nuclear issue, the labor issue requires you to go the department of labor. Adam represented himself most of the time, except he was required to get a lawyer for the dept of labor case.

He said prior to the incident everyone liked him. He was considered the top in his field and one of their best workers. He says, " then I told them - hey something is kinda screwy around here - and they didn't want me anymore ". I must add without prejudice and many will affirm, Adam has always been an extremely hard worker.

About 1 or 2 weeks after he was fired the plant was forced into shutdown and it was later determined that the leak was in a location next to the Safeguards building, also 60 feet below level and a design for the pump system was flawed. Gravity only allows the pumps to suck up water 33 1/3 feet and they had to move it 60 feet. They needed another pump to move it the additional distance.

The NRC case yielded 2.1 million in fines and the reactors shut down. Inadequate Engineering Violations -- \$500,000, Corrective Action Violations -- \$1 Million, Technical Specification Violations -- \$500,000, Quality Assurance Violations -- \$100,000.

He got a job back when he won his case and they paid him \$100,000 over 8 years. When he went back to work no one wanted to work with him. The job they gave him was beneath his qualifications. For two years he was force to do what he called skit garbage. He checked for radiation levels in all garbage. He said, "How can I be qualified better than my supervisors and doing this job?"

After his reinstatement, some of the things he remembers are someone cut the fan belt on his car. At lunch someone put a plastic mouse in his lunch box. Then one day he was looking at a manual and he lifted his safety glasses to the top of his head while reading and a coworker took a picture of him and then taunted him for not following safety regulations with his glasses. My brother got the picture back. The other guy called security and ten guards showed up, formed a perimeter around him and forced him to walk off the premises. They fired him again.

Just to let you know, Adam is doing great and is as strong willed as ever. The entire incident did mar his psyche for a while, how could it not...

Citations made Nov 19, 2006

More complete details of the 2.1 million NRC case.

<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/news/1997/97-180.html>

www.nrpt.org for more information on the **National Registry of Radiation Protection Technologists**

<http://www.nrrpt.org/documents/2006HandbookCOMPLETE.pdf>

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CODE OF ETHICS

In achieving registration, the Registered Radiation Protection Technologist recognizes and assumes responsibilities due the profession of radiation protection.

The Registered Technologist, while active in the field of radiation protection, has a commitment to maintain technical competence. This shall be accomplished by remaining acquainted with scientific, technical, and regulatory development.

In order to uphold the integrity of the profession of radiation protection implied in this Registry, relations with others (including supervision, colleagues, governmental agencies, and the general public) shall be based upon and reflect the highest standards of professional ethics and conduct.

Registration may be revoked for action considered by the Board to be in violation of the "Code of Ethics." Any person for whom such action is contemplated shall have the right of appearance before the Board.