

# DOE NEWS

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## **HANFORD RELEASES FINAL SOLID WASTE EIS**

*Records of Decision to Follow*

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Richland Operations Office (RL) has released its Final Hanford Solid (Radioactive and Hazardous) Waste Environmental Impact Statement (HSW EIS), after addressing comments from the State of Washington and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, area Tribal nations, stakeholders and the general public.

The HSW EIS analyzes alternatives for (1) disposing of immobilized low-activity waste from the Hanford tanks, low-level waste, and mixed low-level waste; (2) treating mixed low-level waste; and (3) processing and certifying transuranic waste prior to its shipment to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico for disposal.

Based on the analyses presented in the nearly 4,000 page document, DOE-RL's preferred alternatives include:

- building a large, lined facility on the Central Plateau for disposal of low-level waste, mixed low-level waste and immobilized low-activity waste;
- modifying existing Hanford facilities and using offsite facilities for treatment of mixed low-level waste;
- modifying existing Hanford facilities, using the Waste Receiving and Processing Facility, and also using mobile processing units to get transuranic waste ready for shipment to New Mexico for disposal.

DOE can issue Records of Decision (RODs) no sooner than 30 days following the document being published in the Federal Register, which is expected to occur February 13, 2004.

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DOE-RL issued the first draft HSW EIS in 2002. In response to public comments, DOE-RL redrafted the document, making key changes including:

- expanding the range and depth of alternatives and supporting analyses to include alternatives for disposal of immobilized low-activity waste from the Hanford tanks;
- distinguishing between the Hanford waste volumes and those projected to come from offsite;
- providing a more complete description of how waste would be transported through the states of Washington and Oregon; and
- expanding the discussion of cumulative impacts, including groundwater impacts.

Since issuing the revised draft EIS in 2003, DOE again responded to public and regulator comments by adding information about groundwater impacts at the boundaries of Hanford facilities, and preparing nationwide transportation analyses covering the movement of waste to and from Hanford using 2000 census data.

To view the full-length document and/or a 60-page summary, visit:

[www.hanford.gov/eis/eis-0286D2/index.cfm](http://www.hanford.gov/eis/eis-0286D2/index.cfm).

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